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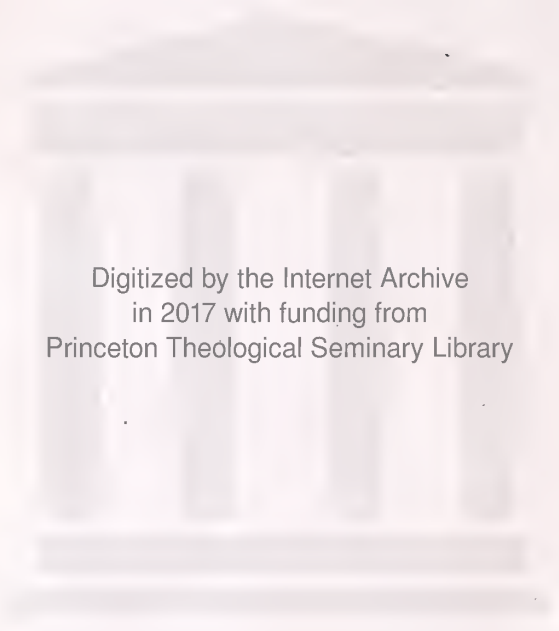
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THE  
Saints Treasury :  
OR, A  
DISCOURSE  
Concerning the  
Glory and Excellency  
OF THE  
Person of *CHRIST*;  
SHEWING

What a Transcendent Excellency there is to be found in him above all Created Excellencies.  
From *Cant. 2. 1. I am the Rose of Sharon, &c.*

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By *JOHN HUNT*, Minister of the Gospel in  
*Northampton.*

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*Rev. 22. 16. I am the Root and Offspring of David, and the Bright and the Morning Star.*

*Col. 3. 11. But Christ is All, and in All.*

*Prov. 8. 11. For Wisdom is better than Rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.*

*Pf. 73. 25. Whom have I in Heaven but thee? And there is none upon Earth that I desire besides thee.*

*Phil. 3. 8. Yea, doubtless, and I do count all things but loss for the Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but Dung that I may win Christ.*

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London: Printed by *R. Janeway*, for *Nath. Hillier*, at the Princes Arms in *Leaden-hall-street*, and *John Pasham*, in *Northampton*,  
Bookfellers, 1704.

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SAINTS TRINITY

DISCOURSE

Glory and excellency

Part of of CHRIST

THE KING

From the ...

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THE  
EPISTLE  
TO THE  
READER.

Christian Reader,

**I** Doubt not but the Ensuing Discourse will be sweet to thy Spiritual Taste, if Prejudice in thee, or Weakness in me, doth not hinder. What can be more Joyous to a Believing Soul who is Married to Christ, than to hear of the Honour, Glory, and Excellency, of her Well-beloved Bridegroom? We have heard much of his Shame, Ignominy and Contempt, while on Earth, and that is Matter of our Sorrow; but to hear of his Glory now in Heaven is Matter of our greatest Joy. It will be the Work of the Saints in another World, and should be their great Work while here, to Study and Admire Christ: And if this is thy Work, he will be a welcome Messenger that can make any farther Discoveries of him to thee. There are in this Day a multitude of Books written, and I doubt

## The Epistle

not but among them thou mayest find some that have the same Tendency with this; (tho' I cannot but fear not so many as ought) but suppose all the Books that have been put forth were on the same Subject, yet I hope it will not savour of Presumption in me to add this small Piece to the rest, since when all that will be written, and indeed all that can be written, comes to be added to what is already written, all will come far short of setting forth the utmost of the Glory and Excellency of Christ. This is a large Field, and 'tis not an easie thing (if possible) to glean it so clean, but that he that comes last may find something: And tho' by reason I come after so many, I may not gather so large a Sheaf as they that have gone before, especially unless I steal out of theirs, which I resolve not to do, (unless to rub a few Ears, which by wise Men never was judged a Crime) yet if I can but fill my own Hand, or gather so much together as may comfort thy Heart, or give thee one refreshing Meal while thou art travelling towards Sion, 'tis enough. And tho' I dare not pretend in this dim Glass to shew thee all his Beauty and Loveliness; nor yet in all that I can say to set forth all his Perfections, but must, after all, leave thee far more short of the Knowledge of him than the Queen of Sheba was of Solomon: Yet who knows but while I am spelling his Name, it may be as Ointment poured forth. As it hath  
been

## to the Reader.

been my great Work to Preach Christ since I came into the Ministry, and hope it shall be while I continue in it; so I would gladly leave some small Legacy to my Brethren, whose Good and Welfare I hope I shall seek both living and dying: And since I know nothing that will be more acceptable to them than a Discourse on this Subject, I have bequeathed them this to remember me by, when my other Works may possibly be forgotten by them; not doubting, by the Blessing of God, but as it was Comfortable and Profitable to many in preaching, so this sweet Rose of Sharon will cast forth some refreshing Savour, when I, among all Flesh, shall fade as a Leaf (a). I remember what is said of Abel, Heb. II 4. being dead, he yet speaketh; and I have reason to think sometime Ministers Voice is more regarded in their Books when dead, than ever it was in their Pulpits while living. Paul's Letters were judged weighty and powerful, tho' his Bodily Presence was thought weak, and his Speech contemptible, 2 Cor. 10. 10. and who knows but mine may be the same? The Time may come when there may be no open Vision; and tho' now the Heavenly Manna falls even at our Tent Doors, yet the Time may come when we may go many Days Journey and not

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(a) Isa. 64. 6.

## The Epistle, &c.

find it. The Time may come when it may be safer and easier to conceal this small Piece than a Faithful Minister of the Gospel; and it will be comfortable to read something, when we can hear nothing of Christ. And may this Book be serviceable at such a Time, or at any Time; may it be made use of by the Blessing of God (while the unworthy Author is living, or when dead) for the Conversion of one Soul, I shall see that Fruit of my Labour which shall satisfy me for my weak Endeavours: Which that it may, is the earnest desire of an unworthy Friend of the Bridegroom,

J. H.

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THE

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T H E

# Saints Treafury, &c.

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C A N T. II. I.

*I am the Rose of Sharon, and the Lilly of  
the Valleys.*

**T**IS not without good Cause that this Song is Entituled *The Song of Songs*, it being that which doth excel all others; not only the vain Songs of the World, but even those many Spiritual Songs compos'd by *Solomon*. In this we have the Incomparable Beauty, and Transcendent Excellency, of Christ set forth under divers Metaphors, to the end that we may the better conceive of him: In this we have an Account of the dear Love Christ bears to his Spouse; saith he, *How fair is thy Love, my Sister, my Spouse? Thou hast ravish'd my Heart, &c.* In this we have an Account of the Inward Breathing of the Spouse after her Beloved; and I had almost said there is no Love lost between Christ and his Spouse; you will find both as it were striving who shall express their Love in the highest Strains. I grant indeed the Saints Love to

Christ

2 *Christ the most Excellent:*

Christ is not commensurate to the Love Christ bears to them, yet in some things there is a dark Resemblance. As the Saints are dearer to Christ than all the World beside, so is Christ to every Believing Soul. Doth Christ greatly delight in his Spouse? *Pf. 45. 11.* So doth the Spouse in Christ, *Cant. 2. 3.* 'Tis pleasant to hear those dear Lovers thus expressing their high Esteem of each other, but more pleasant to be the Objects of his Love, and to feel our Affections drawn out to him as *a vehement Flame that many Waters cannot quench (b).* Oh! how sweet is it to say, *My Beloved is mine, and I am his (c).* To feel his *Left Hand under our Heads, and his Right Hand embracing us (d)*; and till then we shall be no more able to sing this Song, or to understand the meaning thereof, than *Nicodemus* could understand the New Birth; for *the Natural Man receiveth not the Things of God, neither can he, because they are Spiritually discerned,* 1 Cor. 2. 14. You will find in reading this Song, how the Daughters of *Jerusalem* (which some understand to be only visible Professors) are brought in wondering at the Spouse, to see such impatient Longings in her after Communion with Christ, Chap. 5. 9. *What is thy Beloved more than another Beloved, that thou dost so charge us?* So may the World say, we see no more in this Song than in another; and indeed 'tis no wonder; for as a blind Man sees no Light when the Sun shines in its *Meridian* Splendor; so no wonder that those that never were Spiritually Illuminated, do remain ignorant of Spiritual Mysteries: But tho' the Daughters could see no more in her Beloved than in another,

(b) *Cant. 8. 7.*

(c) *Cant. 2. 16.*

(d) *Cant. 2. 6.*

ther, yet we find the Spouse was not at a loss for an Answer to that Question; *faith she, My Beloved is White and Ruddy, the Chiefest among Ten Thousand (e).* And when she had particularly set forth his Beauty, concludes, Verse 16. *This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend, O Daughters of Jerusalem.*

The Saints have been made to see somewhat of his Beauty, and so cannot but admire him, while others see no Beauty in him, and so do not desire him. *Isa. 53. 3.* the Saints only know the worth of this Pearl of Price, and therefore they only prize him, *1 Pet. 1. 7.* To you therefore that believe, he is Precious, while to others he is a Stone of Stumbling; the Saints are inabled for to comprehend something of his Love to them, which constrains them to love him again. *1 John 4. 19.* *We love him, because he first loved us.* I hope, my Brethren, I am speaking of that which you have felt upon your own Souls, and that you can set to your Seal that this is true; and to you, I hope, this Discourse will be pleasant and delightful, while others, whose Eyes the God of this World hath blinded, care for none of these things. The Saints have Meat to eat which the World know not of, and are fed with hidden Manna.

And since the Matter contained in this Song is so sweet to our Spiritual Taste, to the end you may have a full Meal of Christ's Spiritual Dainties in his Banqueting-house, my Design is in Course to go through this whole Chapter, as the Lord shall enable me for so great a Work. When I cast my Eye on the Chapter, and consider the Truths contained therein, I may say, Who is sufficient for these things? And as the blessed *Paul,*

#### 4 *Christ the most Excellent :*

*O the Depth (f)!* But yet since the Streams are pleasant as well as deep, I shall venture to wade the farther into them.

In this Chapter I shall meet with divers Metaphors, which I shall handle as I go; and blessed be God for such Metaphors, to help our weak Understandings; each of them being as a Glass to give us the clearer view of what is in Christ. We should not know how to conceive aright of Christ if he was not thus set forth unto us. Christ's Excellency doth not so much consist in his Humane Nature as in his Divine; and what dark Conceptions should we have had of that, if not thus shadowed out unto us; and in no part of Scripture do we meet with more Metaphors than in this Song, and it may be because it is so Mysterious.

There is one thing necessary for me to observe in my preaching on this Song, and for you in reading or hearing it, if you would rightly understand it, or receive any true Comfort from it, and that is carefully to observe who it is that speaks. Now this Song is carry'd on between Christ, the Spouse, and the Daughters of *Jerusalem*: And tho' in some places it seems somewhat difficult to distinguish the Voice of Christ from the Voice of the Spouse; yet in my Text it seems past all Dispute that it is Christ that speaks; which will appear, if we consider the Person here speaking speaks in his own Commendation. Now tho' Christ may without Pride or Presumption speak in his own Praise, and indeed is the fittest Person so to do, no Man, no, nor Angel, being fully able to express what those Glorious Perfections are which do concenter in him; yet it no ways becomes a Saint to be the Trumpeter of his own  
Praise,



Or, *The Glory of Christ unvail'd.* 5

Praise, *Prov.* 27. 2. *Let another praise thee, and not thy own Mouth, &c.* *Prov.* 25. 27. *Luke* 24. 11. If you search the whole Book of God, you will find all the Saints speaking by one consent in another Dialect: We oft find Christ in this Song commending his Spouse, and the Spouse admiring of Christ, but no where is she commending her self, as in her self, but stiling her self Black; and in the 14th Verse of this Chapter she is hiding her self in the Clefs of the Rocks, and in the secret Places of the Stairs, as one ashamed of her own Deformity.

And tho' we find *Job* pleading in his own Defence in Opposition to that Charge of Hypocrisie brought in against him by his Friends, yet when he came to have to do with God, and to consider how short he came of Perfection, see how he changes his Speech, *Job* 42. 6. *Wherefore I abhor my self, and repent in Dust and Ashes.* *David*, tho' a Man after God's own Heart, yet oft complains of himself, and condemns himself, as in *Pf.* 51. 1, to the 7th Verse. So good *Asaph*, *Pf.* 73. 22. *I was as a Beast before thee;* nor had the Prophet *Isaiab* any better Opinion of himself, *Isa.* 6. 50. then said he, *Woe is me, for I am undone, for I am a Man of unclean Lips, &c.* nor was the blessed *Paul* otherwise minded, while he owns himself less than the least of all Saints, *Ephes.* 3. 8. and how bitterly doth he complain of a Body of Death? *Rom.* 7. so that we can see no Reason to suppose those words in my Text to be spoken by the Spouse. Had the Spouse been speaking of herself, she would much rather have compared herself to the Thorns among the Lillies, than to the Rose of *S Sharon*: Rather to the Nettle or Bramble, than to the Lilly in the Valley; for tho' the Saints have that in them by

Grace

## 6 Christ the most Excellent :

Grace which is truly Excellent, yet withal they have such Relicks of their corrupt Natures in them, as may stain the Pride of all their Glorifying ; and tho' in one Place *Paul* tells us, *If any Man hath whereof he may glory in the Flesh, I more*, Phil. 3. 4. yet in *Gal. 6. 14.* saith he, *God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.* The wise Man cannot glory in his Wisdom (g), because he hath much Folly ; the strong Man cannot glory in his Strength, because he hath much Weakness ; they shine at best but with a borrowed Light, they have no Good but what they have received, and so cannot boast (h) ; if they are Comely 'tis through the Comeliness that Christ puts upon them ; their own Garments are Moth-eaten, and too Scanty to cover their Deformity.

But now Christ may speak forth his own Praise, because all Perfections do concenter in him, as the Beams in the Sun. He did no Sin, but was a Lamb without Blemish : He is the Chiefest among Ten Thousand. He may say (and that without Presumption), *I am the Bright and the Morning Star ; I am Alpha and Omega.* (i) And indeed, there is none so fit to speak of him, as he is of himself. Alas, we know but in part, we see but darkly, as through a Glass ; (k) our Beloved shews himself but through the Lattices, we see but his back Parts ; our imperfect Understandings cannot reach those Perfections that are in him ; and since we know but in Part, we can prophesie but in Part: We cannot speak of that with our Mouths ; that we never could comprehend in our Minds, but now Christ knows not only what is in us, but what is in himself ; and so is most meet  
to

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(g) *Jer. 9. 23.* (h) *I Cor. 4. 7.* (i) *Rev. 1. 11.* (k) *I Cor. 13. 12.*

to speak of what is in him; and if he did not, his Excellencies, tho' great in themselves, yet would lye concealed from us for ever; we can comprehend no more of Christ than what we receive, as being taught by the Word and Spirit of Christ; we know but little of him now, but should have known nothing of him, if he had not thus revealed himself to us.

Now since we are sure it is Christ that speaks, we ought to give the more earnest Heed to what is spoken, he is worthy of Audience; never Man spoke like him; his Mouth is most Sweet: *I am the Rose of Sharon, &c.* Christ thus commends himself to draw out the Love of his Spouse the more to him; and observe, he doth not only say I am a Rose, or a Lilly, but I am *Sharon's* Rose, and the Lilly of the Valley: And both serve to set forth one and the same thing: *Sharon* was a fruitful Place, and more especially a Place Excellent for Roses, *Isa.* 35. 1, 2. In other Places there might be Roses, but none like *Sharon's* Rose; so Valleys being low Places, Lillies thrive there, when those upon the Mountains are scorched and wither away: No Lillies are like those in the Valley, so that both hold forth the same thing; that as there is no Rose so Excellent as *Sharon's* Rose, no Lilly like that which grows in the Valley; so tho' there are many excellent Endowments to be found in the Creatures, yet there is a transcendent Excellency in Christ above all. In handling this sweet Subject, I shall first handle the Metaphor, and then insist on the Doctrine contained therein. In handling the Metaphor, I shall show you how Christ may be compared to a Rose, and and then shew in what Respect he excels a Rose, even *Sharon's* Rose: For sure I am, neither this, nor all the borrowed Expressions in the World,  
can

can fully set forth all the Excellencies of Christ; for look, as in the drawing of a Picture, the Limner doth all he can to draw every Feature exactly, especially such as are most Beautiful, and yet after all something is wanting: Nay, the better Part is wanting; he cannot picture the Soul, or the Excellencies of that rational Faculty. So we Ministers do all we can to shew forth the Beauty and Glory of Christ by this and the other Metaphor, and yet after all we give you just Cause to say the half is not told you (*l*), he that would know what is in Christ, must go to him, and not to Creatures, to learn, for he is said to have a Name which no Man knows but himself. *Rev.* 19. 12. So when I have used all the Similitudes I can, there will remain some Excellency undiscerned in him, the more we know of Christ, the more we shall desire to know, and the less we shall think we do know. *Paul* was no small Proficient in the School of Christ; he had been caught up to the Third Heaven (*m*), and no doubt but during that time had glorious Manifestations of Christ, as ever any Man in the Body had; and yet see his Language, *Phil.* 3. 9, 10. mind, that I might know him: Why, *Paul*, dost thou count all things but Dung for him, and yet not know him? Doubtless he knew him, or he could never have taught us to know so much of him: And he expressly tells us how God revealed Christ to him, *Gal.* 1. 15, 16. *When it pleased God, who separated me from my Mother's Womb, and called me by his Grace, to reveal his Son in me; mind, in me; not only to me, but in me; that is spiritually, and savingly: But why then did he so much desire to know him? Doubtless his*

Meaning

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(*l*) *1 Kings* 10. 7. (*m*) *2 Cor.* 12. 2.

Meaning is, that he might know him more, see more of his Excellency: He that so much exhorted us to grow in the Knowledge of Christ, was desirous of the same himself; for tho' he knew him so well as to trust his Soul in his Hands, and to rely upon him for Life and Salvation; tho' he knew him so well as to love him above all; tho' he knew him so well as to suffer much, and to part with all things for his sake (n); yet he was sensible there was something more in him than he had yet learned. Nor was this Spirit peculiar to *Paul* only, but that which is common to all Saints. Look as the Knowledge of Christ, when we have in some measure attained it, produces the rarest Effects, *John. 17. 3. This is Life Eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, &c.* so it is a Knowledge most hardly attained. Well, tho' I shall not so much as pretend to shew you all his Excellency from this Metaphor, yet I shall do the best I can; and tho' I cannot shew you all his Glory, (my dim Eye having never seen it) yet if I can but make such Discoveries of him to you as may draw out your Love to him, and Desires after him, above all things in the World, I have gained my end; and till then I have done nothing. I come after this short Digression to the handling of the Metaphor, from which I am to shew you in what Respects Christ may be compared to a Rose, which without playing with, or straining the Metaphor, you may take in these following Particulars.

1. Resemblance between Christ and Roses is this, Roses grow not common in every place;

you

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(n) *Phil. 3. 8.*

you may go into Woods and Defarts, and there you may find Briars and Thorns, but no Roses; Roses grow in Gardens, yet not in all Gardens neither; in some you may see Trees full of Leaves, and Blossoms, and some Fruit too, and yet perhaps no Roses there: Thus with respect to Christ, this sweet Rose of *Sharon*. As Christ was not given with an equal Design to save all, but to save the Hundred Sheep, that little Flock, to whom it was the Father's good pleasure to give the Kingdom (o); so neither is Christ to be found in all. Alas, what do the poor Heathens know of Christ? This sweet Rose grows not upon that bitter Stock of Nature: The poor blind Heathen have neither heard his Voice, nor seen his Shape, but are now in the same deplorable State and Condition that these *Ephesians* were once in, *Eph. 2. 12. without Christ*. It seems a ridiculous thing to them to hear any talk of Salvation by a Redeemer; and as I said, Roses grow not in every Garden, so there are many Professors that look upon themselves as separated from the World, who are Baptized; and would scorn to be compared to Heathens, and yet know nothing of Christ in them, the Hope of Glory: They live soberly, and wrong no Man, but yet know nothing of the Presence of Christ with them; strict in performing some Duties, but Strangers to Christ. Christ dwells only in a Remnant; he is to be found only in his Garden the Church. *Cant. 5. 1. I am come into my Garden, my Sister, my Spouse, &c.* This Rose is to be found only among Lillies, *Cant. 6. 2. My Beloved is gone down into his Garden, to the Bed of Spices, to feed in his Garden, and to gather Lillies.*

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(o) *Luke 12. 32.*

Or, *The Glory of Christ unvail'd.* II

*les.* Christ hath an Inclosure, which he hath taken out of the wide World, and there he delights to be; to his own he is pleased to manifest himself, tho' not to the World (*p*), and hath promised, *Matth.* 18. 20. that where Two or Three are gathered together in his Name, there he will be in the midst of them. Christ is not the Lot of every Man's Inheritance; many have great Honour in the World, but have neither Part nor Lot in this Matter (*q*). Many have much Wealth and Riches, but no Part in this Pearl of Price. The Glory and Excellency of Christ is oft hid from the Wise and Prudent of the World; and mean time revealed unto Babes (*r*). O prize Christ you that have him; every one partakes not of your Blessedness.

2. Roses are sweet and refreshing to all, but such as are deprived of their Natural Senses; every one that comes into a Garden will be plucking a Rose, and will even put it into their Bosom; indeed, to such as are deprived of their Smell, a stinking Weed may as much delight and refresh them as the sweetest Rose; and thus it is as to Christ the Rose of *Sharon*. One dead in Sins can take no delight in Christ, he is senseless, and this precious Rose of *Sharon* is nothing to him; and as the clearest Day and the darkest Night are both alike to one blind; so the God of this World hath so blinded the Eyes of Sinners (*s*), that they neither see any Need of him, nor Beauty in him (*t*), and therefore make light of him. Such as these can find more sweetness in a Lust than in Christ the Lord of Glory. Sin and the Vanities

B

of

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(*p*) *John* 14. 22. (*q*) *Acts* 8. 21. (*r*) *Matth.* 11 25.  
(*s*) *2 Cor.* 4. 4. (*t*) *Isa.* 53. 2.

of this World suit with their Natures, but nothing in Christ suits with their corrupt Inclinations; they smell no sweetness, no, not in the Rose of *Sharon*. But now it is otherwise with the Saints, *Cant. 2. 8. I sat down under his Shadow with great delight, and his Fruit was sweet to my Taste*; as if she had said, I know not what others think of him, or see in him, but this I can say from comfortable Experience, he is sweet to me. Mind, 'tis said she sat down, as one so refreshed with his sweet Shade and Fruit, that she knew not how to stir from that Place; like those Disciples at Christ's Transfiguration, *Matth. 17. 2, 3, 4. 'Tis good for us to be here.* So the Spouse finding such sweetness in this Rose of *Sharon*, sits down in full Contentment. So also *Cant. 5. 16. His Mouth is most sweet*; not only sweet, but most sweet: Or as in the Margent, *Towers of Perfumes*. Oh! the Ravishing, Soul-refreshing, sweetness a believing Soul finds in Christ! All the most Odoriferous Smells, whether Natural or Artificial, being to the Body as so many Stinks, if compared with that Sweetness the Soul finds in Christ, this Rose of *Sharon*. The Spouse seems to want Words to express that sweetness she found in Christ; sometimes she compares him to Ointment poured forth, *Cant. 1. 3.* and those Ointments they had in those Places were most fragrant, especially when poured forth; as you may see, *John 12. 3.* 'tis said *The whole House was filled with the Odour of that Ointment, when poured forth*; and no doubt but to those sweet Ointments she alludes. Sometimes she compares him to Myrrh, *Cant. 1. 13. A bundle of Myrrh is my Well-beloved unto me, he shall lye all Night between my Breasts*: Now Myrrh is known to be a sweet-smelling



smelling Herb, and sure a bundle of it must be sweet indeed. Once more, *Pf. 45. 8. All thy Garments smell of Myrrh, Aloes, and Cassia*; which were all sweet Perfumes, as you may see, *John 19. 39.* And mind, 'tis said, *All thy Garments, &c.* You know sweet Perfumes make every thing sweet that they touch, so every thing we enjoy with Christ is made sweet to us: Be our Enjoyments greater or lesser, it makes them comfortable, when we can say, I have those and Christ too; I have these Lands, these Houses, this Money, these Friends, and I have Christ, which is more worth than they all. How contemptible are all the Delights in the World, if compared to those Delights the Saints find in Christ? Many have forsaken the former for Christ's sake, but never any forsook Christ, that truly was in him, to gain the Delights of this World; so sweet is this Rose of *Sharon*.

*Solomon* that had tried what Delights the Creatures could afford, after all, found them to be *Vanity and Vexation of Spirit (v)*: All the Delights of this Carnal World being but Torments, if compared to what a Believing Soul finds in Christ. We never knew what true Joy and Comfort means till we come to enjoy Communion with Christ, and then how do we even nauseate all our former Delights. Let a Soul be never so oppressed and cast down, if he is sorrowful, as it were, even unto Death, let his Case be so desperate that all Physicians are of no Value, but prove miserable Comforters, yet even then one View of Christ by Faith will afford speedy Ease and Refreshment to that Soul. Oh! how sweet is this Rose of *Sharon*!

B 2

3. Roses

3. Roses, tho' sweet and refreshing, yet they are not very delightful to the Eye; many Flowers of far less Vertue and Excellency are much more beautiful as to outward appearance. So as to Christ, this Rose of *Sharon*, tho' in himself he is most Excellent, yet his outward appearance was very mean in the Flesh; he was looked upon by the Carnal World to be *as a Root out of a dry Ground, and he hath no Form nor Comeliness, and when we shall see him, there is no Beauty that we should desire him*, Isa. 53. 3. He did not appear in that outward Pomp and Grandeur which many do, of far lower Rank and Degree: His Excellency was so veiled that none but an Eye of Faith could discern it; he took upon him the Form of a Servant (*u*), and appeared so mean, that when he *came unto his own they received him not* (*w*). If we view him on the Cross, numbred with Transgressors (*x*), how unlike did he seem to be he that should Redeem *Israel* (*y*)? If we look to him as he is set forth in the Gospel, you will find him set forth in the plainest Stile; he requires no outward Pomp in his Worship, but rather forbids it: He doth not approve that any of *Aaron's* Bells or Fringes should be stitched to his Garments. Christ loves not that any should preach him with inticing Words of Mens Wisdom; he knows there is so much Excellency in himself, and in the Truths of the Gospel, that there is no need for him or them to be adorned with Humane Eloquence. He loves to wear a seamless Coat, and not to be dress'd in a Garment suited to the Times; he sought not Honour from

(*u*) *Phil* 2. 7.  
(*y*) *Luke* 24. 21.

(*w*) *John* 1. 11.

(*x*) *Isa.* 53. 12.

from Men. Oh, how was this sweet Rose of *Sharon* once, as it were, trampled under foot by the blind World, because he appeared so mean! 'Tis dangerous judging of Christ's Excellency by his outward appearance. If we would judge of him aright, we must judge of him as Faith represents him to be, and not according to the Dictates of Carnal Reason. Christ was not like the Men of the World, that love to put the best side outward, that so Men may judge them to be better than indeed they are: No, he did not regard the Commendation of Men, he well knew his mean Appearance would render him very Contemptible to the World, but he mattered none of those things.

4. A Rose may be nearly resembled by Art by that which really is no Rose, as by Wax or Paper: Yea, so nearly may it be resembled, that it may be hard to distinguish between that which is Natural, and that which is Artificial, excepting in this, that which is Artificial will not cast forth that refreshing savour which a Natural Rose doth. So as to Christ, we seem to live in that Day foretold, when there should arise False Christs, yet so like him, that they shall deceive, if it were possible, the very Elect. The Pope he pretends to be the Head of the Church, and so virtually owns himself to be Christ. Others they feign a Christ in every Man, but this is a False Christ; therefore while these deluded Souls are saying lo here is Christ, and lo there (*z*), take the Advice Christ gives, *Matth. 24. 23. believe it not, go not after them; for tho' such may by Signs and lying Wonders deceive many, they shall never*

B 3

ver finally deceive the Elect (a). And indeed it may seem strange that any should be deceived, and that any Foot should be taken in that Snare which lyes so open, since that Christ that is in the Wicked needs no other Mark to be known by to be a False Christ. If Christ is in every Man, as these Deceived and Deceivers dream, it seems a needless Exhortation to examine and prove our selves to see if Christ be in us, 2 Cor. 13. 5. Such certainly are walking but in the Light which their own Sparks have kindled. Such can have but little Light in them, whatever they may glory of, who cannot discern the beautiful Jesus from deformed self; and whatever purblind Reason may judge, 'tis not all their Witneffings that will prove to the satisfaction of a Believing Soul that this is the Christ; the Spouse knows her Beloved from a Stranger, for he is known of his: And such as do not know this Beloved from another Beloved, 'tis an infallible Sign the Light in them is but Darkness, and then *how great is that Darkness?* *Matth. 6. 23.* The difference between the True Christ and self, is not so small but it will easily be discerned by any but those whose Eyes the God of this World hath blinded: The difference between these Two being no less than between Light and Darkness, as you may see by comparing *John 12. 46.* with *Eph. 5. 8.* And they must be dimlighted that cannot discern between these. This pretended Light is no more to be compared to Christ than a Rose made of Paper or Wax is to a Natural Rose; nor doth it any more deserve to be called Christ than the Ear-rings with which *Aaron* made the People a Calf deserved to be called

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(a) *Matth. 24. 24.*

called the God which brought them out of *Egypt*, tho' falsely so termed by those Idolatrous *Israelites* (b). In a word, those People worship a God as unable to save them and help them in a time of Trouble, as *Baal* was to hear those Idolatrous Priests, when they cried to him from Morning till Noon, and cut themselves with Knives and Lances till the Blood gushed out upon them, 1 Kings 18. 26, 28.

And as I said, tho' that which is Artificial, may, to the Eye, nearly resemble that which is Natural, yet the former doth not cast forth that sweet and refreshing savour that the latter doth; nor is it so much to be valued. So as to Christ, tho' there may be that which may somewhat resemble him, yet it cannot afford that sweet savour to a sensible Soul that Christ doth, nor is it to be esteemed as Christ is. *Paul* had been strict in obeying this Light within, even when a Pharisee; but when once he had seen the True Light shining into him, and God had revealed his Son to him, he throws away all his Confidence in this Arm of Flesh, and counts all Loss and Dung that he might win Christ, and be found in him, not having on his own Righteousness, *Philip.* 3. 8, 9. Mind, he doth not only desire to find Christ in him by his Spirit for his Sanctification, but desires that he may be found in Christ by Faith for his Justification: He well knew, that as he stood in need of the former to make him meet for Heaven, so he stood as much in need of the latter to give him a Right and Title to Heaven; and that without it he was like never to come there; nor doth he desire to be found utterly devoid of any Righteousness in him, but he desires not to have it found upon him; he

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(b) *Exod.* 32 4.

would not have that his only Garment, left the Shame of his Nakedness should appear (c). He well knew he could only be comely through the Comeliness which Christ put upon him (d), and therefore, while he earnestly desired a Righteousness of his own to be within him for his Sanctification, he desires the Righteousness of Christ to be upon him for his Justification. Sweet Saint, he knew a vast Difference between his own Righteousness, or the Grace of God in him, and the Righteousness of Christ imputed to him; and judged it safest to put on the Lord Jesus Christ, while he made no Provision for the Flesh (e). And as for such as do not, I am verily perswaded that the Time is coming when they will be made to see that their own Righteousness, by whatsoever Names or Titles dignified or distinguished, will no more be able to cover their Nakedness from God's avenging Eye, than our First Parents Fig-leaves, which with so much Labour they had stitched together, could cover theirs (f). And when they will be made to find that this Light they have so much boasted of, and gloried in, will only serve to let them see their own Folly and Madness, and will leave them to lye down in Sorrow, *Isa.* 50. 11. Mistakes in this Case are exceeding dangerous.

5. Roses are observed to grow upon pricking Bushes, and he that will gather the Rose, must expect some Scratch, more or less, in his Flesh. So as to Christ, some Thorn in the Flesh will be ready to grieve those that enjoy the Sweet of this Rose of *Sharon*. Troubles and Persecutions are

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(c) *Rev.* 3. 18. (d) *Exek.* 16. 14. (e) *Rom.* 13. 14.

(f) *Gen.* 3. 7.

are called Briars and Thorns, *Ezek.* 28. 24. which is a Promise of their Deliverance from the Rage of their Enemies; and such Briars and Thorns we must expect to meet with while we are travelling through this howling Wilderness. They that will have Christ, must deny themselves, and take up their Cross, *Matth.* 16. 24. They that will reign with him hereafter, must suffer something for him here; we must go through Tribulations for Christ in this World, before we can enjoy those everlasting Consolations with Christ in that World which is to come (g). He that will follow Christ, and go *Sion*-ward, will find the Way narrow (h). We must go through a Wilderness to the Heavenly *Canaan*. The Saints are Way-laid, and must fight the good Fight of Faith, if they will lay hold on Eternal Life (i). The Way to Heaven is safe, but rough; the Saints must expect the World to deride them, and that they should be a Prey to the mighty Hunters of the Earth, and to be made the Objects of the *Ishmael's* Scorn. Christ tells his People they shall be hated of all Men for his Sake (k). Nor will Satan suffer them to go quietly to their Heavenly Inheritance, without letting fly some fiery Dart from his Quiver. He that meets with no Lets or Impediments in his Way, hath Reason to question whether his Way leads to the *New-Jerusalem*: For saith the Apostle, all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer Persecution; either in their Persons, by cruel Oppression; or in their Estates, by unjust Exaction; or in their Names, by slanderous Accusations. Such as only take up with a Form of Godliness, who can be content only to live soberly,

(g) *John* 16. 33. (h) *Mat.* 7. 14. (i) *1 Tim.* 6. 12.  
(k) *Mat.* 10. 22.

berly, and wrong no Man, such may possibly escape better ; but if we will live godly, and live godly in Christ Jesus too, we must expect Persecutions. In a Word, there is no Christian that truly believes in Jesus, but hath some Cross to carry after his Lord : They must with their Fore-runner drink of the Brook by the Way before they lift up the Head (l). The Way to Heaven and Happiness lying through Persecution, Shame, Scorn and Contempt. We must (as it were) first wear a Crown of Thorns before we wear a Crown of Glory.

Nor need any thing I have spoken in the least discourage any from following after the Lamb, since it is much better to have these Scratches in the Flesh, than to be without this sweet Rose. The Troubles we must undergo for Christ, tho' they are certain, yet but short ; they are as short as sharp. These Wounds we get from these grieving Briars are but Skin-deep, and will soon be healed. It will be but a while before the wicked will cease from troubling (m), and when thou wilt be above the Reach of Men, and beyond the Rage of Devils. Those mighty Hunters will not know where to find thee, or at least how to come at thee, when once thou art got into the Paradise of God : The Days of thy Mourning will then be ended. Nor will it then grieve thee that thou hast suffered so much for Christ, when thou comest to be with him where he is, to behold his Glory. Yea, let me tell you, the more you suffer for Christ here, the more sweet your Rest will be in the World to come : The more deeply you sigh here, the more loudly shall you sing there. Christ is a good Pay-master, and will not let us lose any thing for his Sake. Let me close  
this

(l) *Psal.* 110. 7. (m) *Job* 3. 17.



Or, *The Glory of Christ unvail'd.* 21

this Head with that sweet Text, *Mar. 10. 28, 29, 30.* He shall receive a Hundredfold now, and in the World to come Eternal Life; and that contains much more.

6. Roses are to be gathered but at some certain Seasons, as in the Summer; and if you come at the right time, you may have them at a reasonable Rate; scarce any will refuse to give you a Rose freely; but if you stay till the Summer is gone, if you would give all you have in the World a Rose cannot be had. So as to Christ, this sweet Rose of *Sharon*, he is now held forth at a reasonably Rate, yea, freely; *Isa. 55. 1.* *Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the Waters, and he that hath no Money come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy Wine and Milk without Money, and without Price.* But if you have not Hearts to receive him, tho' the Time will come when if you would give all the World, you will not gain him. Now the Door stands wide open to returning Souls to enter in; but if *once the Master of the House is risen, and hath shut to the Door*, tho' you may cry you will find no Entrance (*n*); all the Notice Christ will take of your Cry, will be to reply as in *Prov. 1. 23, &c.* *Because I called, and ye refused, I stretched out my Hand, and no Man regarded, I will even laugh at your Calamity, and mock when your Fear cometh.* And then you will cry out in the Bitterness of your Souls, *The Summer is ended, and we are not saved,* *Jer. 8. 20.* Memorable to this Purpose is that Passage of the Foolish Virgins, *Mat. 25. 1,* to the 10th Verse, they came too late, they slept away that Time in which they should have got their Oil, and so had it to buy when

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(n) *Luk. 13. 25.*

when they wanted it to burn, and so could find no Entrance, the Door was shut. Oh how many such Foolish Virgins are there in the World, that sleep away their precious Time! Nor can we with all the loud Calls of Grace and Mercy on the one Hand, nor by the dreadful Threatnings of the Law on the other Hand, awaken them: But let such know, that as those were counted Foolish in so doing, so it will be your greatest Folly to neglect Christ, and your own Soul's Good: And sure I am, if you sleep away your Time as they did, Christ will take no more Notice of you than he did of them; and how unspeakably dreadful to hear Christ say, I know not whence you are; to hear Christ begin to laugh when you begin to cry. The Lord grant that none that read these Lines may ever know what it is.

*Jerusalem* once had her Time when Christ was freely preached to her; but she sinned it away, and would none of him; and how did it draw Tears from the Eyes of the Blessed Jesus? *Luk. 19. 41, 42. And when he was come near, he beheld the Place, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy Day, the Things which belong unto thy Peace; but now they are hid from thine Eyes.* God waited Forty Years on *Israel*, but at last *swore in his Wrath they should not enter into his Rest, Psal. 95.* Now is the Time, or never; tho' this sweet Rose withers not in it self, yet your Opportunity to get it will not last always. It is as to the Soul much as it is as to the Body in another Case; you know at some certain Times, and in some certain Places, we have great Fairs, some continue One Day, and some more, where we may supply all our Wants at  
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reasonable Rates; but if you stay till the Fair is over, you can have nothing there at any Rate. So now Christ is preached to you, as one in whom all Fulness dwells, as one that is able to supply all your Wants; but if you refuse him, this Day will soon be over, and then no buying, no, not for Money or Price. Only let this Difference be ever carefully observed, he that will buy any thing in a Fair must give the full Worth of the thing, or he cannot have it; but you may have Christ, and all Things with him, freely; yea, this is the highest Price that ever was set upon the Water of Life, *Rev. 22. 17.* which Difference will be Matter of Grief and Torment One Day to such as reject him. How will it make the Worm of Conscience gnaw in another World, for to think, O Fool that I was, that had such a low Price put into my Hand, and yet had no Heart to improve it (o)! That had Christ so freely and so frequently preached to me, and yet I stopped my Ears, and would not hear his Voice. Oh Sirs! If ever you would have this Rose of *Sharon*, come in the Season thereof, lose no Opportunity, be not more foolish than the Birds, *Jer. 8. 7.* *Yea, the Stork in the Heaven knoweth her appointed Times, and the Turtle, and the Crane, and the Swallow, observe the Time of their coming.* Yea, the very Insects are said to *provide their Meat in the Summer, and to gather their Food in the Harvest.* How sad is it to think that those silly Creatures, which have no Guide or Overseer to instruct them, but do all from an Instinct in Nature, should yet be wiser than Man, who is endued with a rational Faculty, and moreover hath many Guides  
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(o) *Prov. 17. 16.*

24 *Christ the most Excellent:*

and Overseers to teach and instruct him! How wise are Men in other Matters, to take the most seasonable time for every thing? How exact and critical to take the proper Time to sow their Seed, and to gather in their Harvest? How observing are they of Market-Days, to buy and sell, and loth to let slip any Opportunity that may any Ways be advantageous as to the Body? But yet, alas! what Fools to let slip the Time, the only Time, that should be improved for the Soul: They oft forget or neglect to gather the Rose till the Summer is ended, and then it cannot be found. They oft neglect Time till the Angel swears in their hearing that Time shall be no more. Nor do many only refuse to improve their Time for their Souls Good, but also spend it in such a Way and Manner as tends to the Destruction of their Souls; and when they should be laying up for themselves a good Foundation for the Time to come, they are *treasuring up Wrath against the Day of Wrath* (p); and when they should be giving *all Diligence to make their Calling and Election sure*, are doing all they can to make Hell and Damnation sure; and when they should be gathering this sweet Rose to refresh them, are, as it were, gathering Nettles and Brambles to torment them.

7. Roses are Things that have a great Vertue in them; and should I instance in all the Vertue there is in a Rose, it may make us think Christ had a special Eye to this, in comparing himself to a Rose; but leaving this to them that study the Body, I shall shew you, as I am able, what Vertues there are in this sweet Rose of *Sharon*, which

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(p) *Rom. 2. 5.*

which are suitable to the Diseases and Maladies of the Soul. And sure I am, tho' there may be, and doubtless is, much Vertue in a Rose, yet there never was that Vertue in any Rose, no, not in the Rose of *Sharon*, for the curing of the Distempers of the Body, that there is in Christ, for the curing the Distempers and Maladies of the Soul. When Christ was on Earth he cured all manner of Sickness as to the Body, and healed all manner of Diseases, as *Halt, Blind, Lame, &c.* (q.): So he hath no less Verrue to cure the Soul now he is in Heaven. Christ was fitly typified by that Pool, *John 5. 1, 2, 3, &c.* and may fitly be compared to those Trees, *Ezek. 47. 12.* whose *Fruit was good for Food, and whose Leaf was good for Medicine.* The Distempers and Diseases of the Soul are many in our lapsed State, *Psal. 103. 3.* It seems he had many Diseases, yea, for ought I know our Souls are subject to as many Distempers as our Bodies. However, I am sure they are more difficult to cure; but there is Vertue in Christ to cure all. O Sirs! were you all impotent and infirm in Body, one of one Distemper, another of another Distemper, and you were to hear a Discourse of the incomparable Vertue that was in some one thing to cure you all, and that thing to be had freely; the Poor might have it as well as the Rich; what thronging would there be from every Quarter, and with what Delight would you hear of it, in hopes of getting Cure by it? One would hope I may get Cure, and another I may be Healed; and were we but as sensible of our Spiritual Maladies as we are of our Corporal, it would be no small Delight to us to hear of the Ver-

## 26 *Christ the most Excellent :*

Vertues that are in Christ, which you may take in these following Particulars.

*First,* Christ hath a quickening Vertue for dead and drowfie Souls.

*Secondly,* An enlightening Vertue suited to blind Souls.

*Thirdly,* A cleansing Vertue for filthy, polluted, Souls.

*Fourthly,* A beautifying Vertue for deformed Souls.

*Fifthly,* A pardoning Vertue for guilty and condemned Souls.

*Sixthly,* A healing Vertue for diseased Souls.

*Seventhly,* A comforting Vertue for sorrowful, dejected, Souls.

*Eighthly,* A strengthening Vertue for weak and feeble Souls.

*Ninthly,* A nourishing Vertue for hungry Souls.

*Tenthly,* A satisfying Vertue for thirsty Souls.

(1.) In Christ, this *Rose of Sharon*, there is a quickning Vertue for dead, or for dull and drowfie; Souls. Christ is said to have Life in himself; *John 5. 26.* Yea, he is Life it self; and so cannot die. We poor Creatures are all by Nature spiritually dead; and tho' we have a natural Life, whereby we are capable of moving from Place to Place, and of conversing and acting as Men; yet we have lost that Spiritual Life which did consist in the Rectitude of the Soul, and whereby we should have been capable of Communion with God, and of speaking and acting for him. We have now no more Ability or Inclination while in this State to do any thing spiritually, than a dead Man hath to perform any natural Action. Thus

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we all of us lye in part under that Curse, *Gen. 2. 17. In the Day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.* And no sooner did he eat thereof but this Spiritual Death seized him, which Death he hath conveyed to his Posterity; and as we cannot keep off this Death no more than we can prevent our Corporal Death, so neither can we quicken our selves from it any more than we can raise the Dead out of their Graves. We being spiritually Dead, cannot give Life to our selves, or to others. But now Christ having Life in himself, and (as I said) being Life it self, he is able to quicken us, *Ephes. 2. 1. And you hath he quickened who were dead in Trespasses and Sins.* So *Joh. 5. 21. For as the Father raiseth up the Dead, and quickneth them, even so the Son quickneth whom he will.* Mind, whom he will; if he but will, it we shall live; If he but breathes upon our dry Bones, we shall awake out of our dead State. Hence Christ is stiled a quickning Spirit, *1 Cor. 15. 45. The first Adam was made a living Soul, the last Adam was made a quickning Spirit.* So *Ver. 22. As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive.* Not that every individual Soul that died in *Adam* shall be made alive by Jesus Christ; no, tho' he had Life enough in himself to have quickened all, as well as some, if he had pleased so to do; but it denotes thus much, that as *Adam* was the only Man by whom Death entered into the World; so it is only by Christ, that any are made alive. Hence 'tis said in *John 7. 36. He that hath the Son hath Life, he that hath not the Son shall not see Life.* As no Man can have Life that hath not the Son, so no Man can have the Son, but he must have Life. As it is impossible for any to see the Sun but he must

necessarily see the Light, because its Nature is to give Light; so 'tis impossible for any to receive Christ, but he must receive Life, because he himself is Life.

Christ can quicken one as well as another; for look as to the Body, some are lately dead, others have long been rotting in their Graves, yet he that can quicken one, may as well quicken another, since no less than a miraculous Power can do either. So as to this Spiritual Death, some have been longer in this dead State than others, yet none have been so long dead but Christ can quicken them. When Physicians have to do with Sick Patients, they find one more hard to be cured than another; a Medicine may take Place in one which will not in another; but no Difference among the Dead. Christ quickens whom he will; he that said to dead *Lazarus*, *Come forth*, when he had been so long dead and buried that his Sister said, *Lord, by this time he stinketh*, and yet he came forth (r), can say to a Soul that hath long lain in the Grave of Sin, *Come forth*, and he shall obey him. *John 5. 25. Verily, verily, I say unto you, the Hour is coming, and now is, when the Dead shall hear the Voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.* Which cannot be meant of the last Resurrection only, because 'tis said the Hour now is.

Now in quickening the Dead there is a Vertue in Christ beyond what is, or can be, in the Creature; when a Physician comes to visit a sick Man, he consults his Disease, feels his Pulse, enquires how long, goes home and prepares some Medicine suitable to his Distemper; but if he finds the Mandead, there's no more he can do; he consults

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(r) *Joh. 11. 43, 44.*



no more the Vertue of any thing in his Shop, alas, the Man is dead: And tho' so long as there is Life there may be Hope, yet when once Life is gone, there is no Hopes of restoring it by all the Art of all the Physicians in the World. So Ministers, who are Spiritual Physicians, we oft preach to dead Souls, we give them the best Advice we can, and yet, after all, we leave them as we found them, unless Christ in our Ministry put forth this quickning Vertue, and say unto them, *Live*; alas, all that we can do is to prophesie over those dry Bones, while *to one we are the Saviour of Life unto Life, we are to another the Saviour of Death unto Death* (f). This differing Influence our Doctrine hath upon Souls, evidently proves that we are not sufficient for these Things: Was it from any Power in us, we should be the Saviour of Life to all, as well as some, since all our Peoples Souls are equally dear to us; so that while the same Sermon causes Life in some Souls, and is an Occasion of Death to others; it doth appear that it is not from any Power in us that any are quickned.

But now, when all others are in this Case Physicians of no Value, Christ alone can do the Work; have we not sometime seen this? Yea, have not some of us, through Grace, felt this quickning Vertue in our own Souls, raising us from the Death of Sin, unto the Life of Righteousness? Have not we heard Christ, as it were, calling us out of our Graves? Can we not set to our Seals to this Truth, that there is such a quickning Vertue in this sweet Rose of *Sharon*? And if we have found it thus, this may encourage us to pray for others; for tho' it is sinful to pray for such as are corporally dead, as the manner of some is, because

they are fixed in an unalterable State, yet 'tis no Ways sinful, but highly commendable, to pray for dead Souls, because Christ is able to quicken them, and we know not but he may do it. I have Reason to think some of you, which read this may have some that are dear to you in this dead State; it may be a dead Husband, a dead Wife, a dead Father, a dead Mother, or a dead Child, and thou hast often called to them, but they have given thee no Answer; and hast shed many a Tear over them, saying, Can these dry Bones live? And now hast given over all Hopes of their Life: But stay, didst thou never hear of that quickning Vertue that is in this Rose of *Sharon*? Hast thou found the Vertue of it quickning thy own Soul, and wilt thou despair of others in the same Case? You once were as dead as they now are, and he that quickned thee can as easily quicken them: And tho' thou may'st not live to see it thus with them, yet their Souls may be quickned, when thy Carcass may be rotting in the Grave. It may be thou may'st part with them when thou comest to die with a sad Heart, saying, Alas, Husband! Alas, my Child! To see the Evil that is like to come upon them, to think what will become of their Miserable, Christless, Souls; and yet may'st meet them glorified Saints in Heaven, whom thou didst leave cursed Sinners: And thy Prayers may be answered when in Heaven; and thou may'st have One Day Cause to say, This, my Husband, my Father, my Mother, my Child, were all dead, but are alive again (1); they were lost, but are now found. Thus may you meet these with the greatest Joy, from whom you parted with the greatest Sorrow.

Christ

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(1) *Luke 15. 32.*

Christ oft-times deferrs doing that for a long time which he is able to do, and designs to do; as in that remarkable Passage of *Lazarus*, as you may read in *John* 11. at large. Observe his Sisters sent to Jesus to come with this prevailing Motive, *He whom thou lovest is sick.* Christ seems to take no Notice, but *stays Two Days in the same Place where he was before.* He stays till *Lazarus* was dead and buried, and had been some Days in the Grave. But behold when all their Hopes were gone, and it seem'd a thing impossible to his Sisters, that Christ himself could revive him, (for when Christ commanded to take away the Stone, his Sister unbelievingly replies, *Lord, by this time he stinketh*; as if she had said, Lord, if thou hadst come when I first sent for thee thou mightest have prevented my Brother's Death, but now 'tis in vain to pretend to quicken his stinking Carcass) and yet observe, even then Christ speaks but the Word, *Come forth*, and he came forth: And observe, he comes forth bound Hand and Foot, that it might appear he did not rise by any Power in himself.

You have another Passage much like the former, *Mark* 5. 35, to the 42th. You see how the Damsel's Friends could only weep over her, they could not put Life into her; and as they could not quicken her themselves, so they were so far from supposing that Christ could, that in the midst of their Sorrow they could laugh him to Scorn. Christ puts them all out, as useless to him, and as unworthy to see the quickning Vertue that was in him, and then saith he, *Damsel, arise, and she arose*, even to the Wonder of them all. Well then, since Christ hath such a quickning Vertue in him, since he often deferrs doing that for a long

time, which he can do, and will do; tho' we cannot quicken our dead Friends, let us hope that Christ may, and let us earnestly pray that he would; let our fervent Prayers mounted on the Wings of Faith be the daily Messengers we send to Christ, to tell him they whom we love are dead.

I shall further add under this Head, as Christ hath a quickning Vertue suited to dead Souls, so also to dull and indisposed Souls. When Christ hath infused into any of our Souls a Principle of Life, yet alas, how subject are we to be drowfie? We read, *Mat. 25. 5.* how the wise Virgins, as well as the foolish, *all slumbered and slept*; and frequent are such Complaints as these, even among the Saints themselves, I find such Deadness and Drowfiness I know not what to do: I dare not omit Praying, Hearing, or Receiving the Sacrament, but alas, I find so little Life in these Performances, that I am ready to faint in my Mind, and to give over all: But what is the Cause of this? Doubtless because thy Eye of Faith is so dim and weak, that thou canst not see afar off; or because thy Beloved, as to the Manifestations of himself to thy Soul, is withdrawn and gone. Could we be looking to him more by Faith, we should derive more quickning Influences from him: The great Reason why our Hearts are so cold, is, because we are no nearer to this Sun of Righteousness. The Savour of this sweet Rose of *Sharon* would revive us were we but nearer to it. When Christ draws near to us, and smiles upon us, how do we run the Ways of his Commandments? How do our drowfie Souls immediately mount up as on Eagles Wings? How comfortable, sweet and delightful, are Duties, when

when we can meet our Beloved there. Now *One Day in thy Courts is better than a Thousand.* When Christ saith, *Awake thou that sleepest, saith the Spouse, Cant. 5. 2. I sleep, but my Heart waketh.* Why what's the Matter? What makes her Heart wake? O! saith she, 'tis the Voice of my Beloved; and that sweet Voice reached to her very Heart, and roused her up. The Reason why the wise Virgins slumbered, was because *the Bridegroom tarried (v).* Had he not been absent perhaps they had never slept. Christ is to the Soul in this Case, as the Sun is to the Earth, so long as that is at a great Distance, and hath withdrawn its wonted Influence, as in the Winter Season, the Earth grows bare, the Grass withereth, Flowers fade, and lose their Beauty, Fruits fall off, and almost all Things look in a decaying Posture, only the Roots remains alive and fresh under Ground: But when the Sun returns again, as in the Spring and the Earth comes again to be warmed by its sweet Influence, O the sweet Change! Now all Nature seems at once to smile, the Earth that grows fresh and green, the Trees bud and blossom, Fruits ripen, Birds sing, and all Things appear delightful. So if Christ, the Son of Righteousness, withdraw from us, alas, what Decays are in the Soul? Our Joy withers, Faith grows faint, and ready to fail, and our Fruit falls off before fully ripe: But when Christ returns, as to his sensible Presence, there is a Spring in the Soul. Now the feeble Hands are lift up, now the Sorrowful begin to throw away their mourning Garments, and to rejoice. Saith the Spouse, *While the King sits at his Table my Spikenard sendeth forth*

## 34 *Christ the most Excellent:*

*forth the Smell thereof.* One Word spoken by Christ to a believing Soul is so sweet, that it will cause even *the Lips of those that are asleep to speak,* Cant. 7. 9.

Thus you see how Christ hath a quickning Vertue for drowfie Souls, as well as for dead Souls; he that can do the greater, can no doubt do the lesser. Oh then! If you would be living and lively Souls, if you would be rid of your Dulness and Indisposition, see that you make use of this sweet Rose of *Sharon*, prize the Manifestations of Christ's Favour, esteem the sensible Discoveries of his Love to be better than Life, *Psal. 63. 3.* and labour to live by Faith under his Withdrawings. Such a quickning Virtue is there in Christ to revive drowfie Souls, that he can do it when nothing in the World can. Those wise Virgins that slumbered and slept while the Bridegroom tarried, were soon awake, and ready upon his Return (*u*); no Spirits will so revive our Bodies, as the Saviour of this Rose of *Sharon* will our drooping Souls; and without him nothing can quicken them. You go to Duties and Ordinances, and hope to be quickned in them, and you do well, they being the Means God hath appointed for us to wait upon him in; but alas, if Christ is not there, these are but as a Funeral Feast, where there is much Meat, but no Mirth. The most powerful Ordinances will be but as fair and dry Breasts, as Wells too deep for us to draw, if Christ doth not let down our empty Pitchers. They will be but as the Linen Cloths in the Sepulchre, without the Body of Jesus, which rather caused Sorrow than Joy. The most lively Ordina-

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(u) *Mat. 25. 6, 7.*

nances will not make us so, unless Christ put Life into these Ordinances. But when Christ draws, we run; the Presence of Christ to the Soul is as Wings to the Bird, without which, tho' living, it cannot mount from the Earth. It is as the Spring to a Watch, or as Weights to a Clock, without which, tho' there is never such curious Art put forth in making them, neither will move. It is as Sails to the Ship: Sails did I say? 'Tis as Wind and Sails both: For look, as a Ship, tho' never so well rigg'd, may yet lye Harbour-bound for want of a fair Wind to fill the Sails; so a Saint may be bound, for want of this quickning Vertue; but when the North Wind and the South Wind blows, we move as with a full Sail. It may be some that never had the Experience of this, who never were made truly sensible of the Deadness and Drowfiness of their own Souls, may wonder what those Things mean; nor shall I wonder if it be so, for Men that are dead, as they do not complain of Indisposition, so neither can they judge of that quickning Vertue that is in Christ to remove it: But I am perswaded there is no Saint but what can set to his Seal to this Truth; not only that there is such a Vertue in Christ, but that they themselves have felt this quickning Vertue coming from him. This is the first Thing.

2. There is in Christ, this Rose of *Sharon*, an En-  
lightning Vertue suited to blind Souls. The Eyes of  
our Understandings are by Nature darkned, yea,  
we are said to be Darkness it self, *Eph. 5. 8. For*  
*ye were sometime Darkness, &c.* but Christ is *come*  
*Light into the World, that whosoever believeth in*  
*him might not abide in Darkness,* *John 12. 46.*  
Christ is compared to the Sun, and you know, if  
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the Night hath been never so dark, even so dark that we could not see to take one step, yet when the Sun rises the Darkness vanishes and disappears: So when once this Sun of Righteousness shines into our Hearts, tho' before our Souls were confined under *Egyptian* Darkness, our blind Eyes will then see out of Obscurity, *Isa.* 29. 18. Christ is said to be sent *to open the blind Eyes.* *Isa.* 42. 7. So *John* 1. 9. *That was the true Light that lighteth every Man that cometh into the World*; not as if Christ did equally enlighten every individual Man that comes into the World, as some blind and deluded People do suppose; but to shew that there is no one Man that cometh into the World which doth receive any true Spiritual Light, but what he hath from him. When Christ was upon Earth he opened the Eyes of a Body which was Born Blind (*w*), and he hath enlightning Vertue for Blind Souls now he is in Heaven; remarkable to this Purpose is that Text, *Rev.* 3. 18. *I counsel thee to buy of me Gold, &c. and then adds, and anoint thine Eyes with Eye-salve that thou may'st see.* No Eyes are so blind but he hath a Salve that will open them; we are so blind by Nature that we see nothing as we ought to see; we see no Deformity, Uglinefs, or Sinfulness, in Sin; we see no Beauty or Excellency in Christ: So much hath the God of this World blinded our Eyes. Man is clean in his own Eyes, by reason of which Christ comes to be despised. Ah, but when once this true Light comes to shine into our dark Hearts, the Day begins to break, and things appears quite contrary to what they did before. Now Sin ap-  
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pears to be *exceeding sinful*; and tho' before we saw not the Plague of our Hearts, yet when once this Light shines into our Hearts, then we easily discern those Motes which before lay hid from us: and tho' before this, for want of Light, we saw no Beauty in Christ, who is the Chiefest among Ten Thousand, yet now he appears to the Soul to be *altogether lovely* (x). And now the Soul cannot but stand amazed that ever he should slight him, and live contentedly so long without him; all the most pleasing and delightful Objects in the World seem to be but Deformity, if compared with him. Our stedfast beholding this glorious Sun, will make dim our Views of things below; and since there is in Christ such an Enlightning Vertue; Sinners, why do you not make out to him, since you have all such need of him in this respect? Why sit you still in Darkness, when a Light Ten Thousand times brighter than the Sun shines so near you? Why sit you still among the *Egyptians* in that Darkness that may be felt, when the *Israelites* have Light in all their Dwellings? Light, O how sweet and comfortable is that! *Eccles. 11. 7. Truly the Light is sweet, &c.* If you lose but a Corporal Eye, how do you complain? How concerned are you? How do you run to Physicians, and care not what Smart you undergo, nor what Cost and Charge you are at, rather than be ever in Darkness? And is not Spiritual Blindness more to be bewailed, and Spiritual Light more to be desired? You may be happy tho' your Eyes should never behold the Light of the Sun. Ah, but thou canst never be truly happy in this World, or that which is to come, unless thine  
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(x) *Cant. 5. 16.*

Eyes are Spiritually Illuminated by the Vertue of this Rose of *S Sharon*. Oh, do thou as those Two Blind Men, *Mat. 20. 30.* to the end, who hearing that Jesus passed by, tho' they had no Eyes to see him, yet having a Tongue to speak, and believing he was able to restore Sight to them, cried out, *Lord, that our Eyes may be opened:* So tho' thou hast as yet no Spiritual Eye to see him, yet so long as thou hast a Tongue, cry to him, that he would open thy blind Eyes, and bring thee by a Way which as yet thou hast not known: Get into the Way where Jesus is to come, I mean, get into his Ordinances, and then lift up thy Voice as they, and how knowest thou, but that thou mayest speed as they did? It is said, *Jesus had Compassion on them, and touched their Eyes, and immediately their Eyes received Sight.* One touch from this Rose of *S Sharon* will cause the Scales to fall off our Eyes, tho' we are Born Blind.

And as for you Saints, why do not you make more use of this Rose of *S Sharon*? You see indeed, but 'tis but darkly, as through a Glass; you see in Spiritualls not much better than he saw Corporally, who saw Men as Trees walking (y); what need then have you to go to Christ to get your Understandings more and more enlightned in the deep Mysteries of the Gospel, that so that little Light you have received may shine more and more clear till it be a perfect Noon-day.

3. In Christ, this Rose of *S Sharon*, there is a cleansing Vertue, suited unto the Condition of filthy and polluted Souls. Sin hath rendred us all as an unclean thing, by reason of which *all our*  
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*Righteousness is as filthy Rags*, Isa. 64. 6. We were besmeared in our Blood in the Day that we were Born, Ezek. 16. 5. Our Bodies did not then stand more in need of washing than our Souls; and since this is all our Conditions, it highly concerns us to enquire how we may be made clean, since *nothing that defileth can enter into the New Jerusalem*, Rev. 21. 27. None but *the pure in Heart shall see God* (2). Unless we are washed with the washing of Regeneration, we shall never enter into the Kingdom of God.

And as our Souls stand in need of being cleansed, so Christ hath in himself a cleansing Vertue. We read, *John 19. 34.* when his Side was pierced *there came out Blood and Water*; not only Blood, for the expiating the guilt of Sin; but Water also, for the washing away of our Filth; and remarkable is that Text to this purpose, *Zech. 13. 1.* (speaking of Gospel-times) saith he, *In that Day there shall be a Fountain opened to the House of David, and to the Inhabitants of Jerusalem, for Sin, and for Uncleanness*: And you know tho' standing Waters may grow muddy, and unfit to cleanse any thing, yet a Fountain is always clear: So this Lamb of God without Spot is able to take away all our Spots. No Soul's so filthy but he can cleanse them; the Apostle reckons up a black Catalogue, *1 Cor. 6. 9.* and in the 11th Verse adds, *And such were some of ye, but ye are washed, &c.* What, such as they washed? *Can the Ethiopian change his Skin, or the Leopard his Spots?* How could it be? Why, saith he, *in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ; and by the Spirit of our God.* Mind, the Spirit is the Efficient, but

but he doth it in the Name of Christ; upon the account of that cleansing Vertue that is in him: And Oh, the loathsome Condition the Spirit finds all in when he comes thus to cleanse us! We read, *Mark. 5. 25, to the 30th,* of a Woman that had an Issue of Blood, who had spent all on Physicians, and yet rather worse than better, and yet upon one Touch of Christ was cleansed: She derived Vertue from him, and *immediately was made whole.* So when Christ comes to a Soul, tho' never so unclean, and tho' never so long in that Case, he can wash it, and make it clean.

*David* had sinned a great Sin, whereby he had much defiled himself; but saith he, *Purge me with Hyssop and I shall be clean, wash me and I shall be whiter than the Snow,* *Psal. 51. 7.* alluding to those Legal Washings by which Christ was Typified. Sweet Saint, he had before found by Experience the cleansing Vertue that was in Christ, and so comes to the same Fountain again, and that with the greatest Confidence in its cleansing Vertue, believing that tho' he was defiled, that Living Fountain remained clear. What a filthy Wretch must that be that Christ cannot cleanse? He must be more unclean than Uncleaness it self. Oh the sweet Encouragement this affords to the vilest of Sinners, to be found waiting upon Christ; for tho' thou mayest be too filthy to go to Christ by Faith in the State and Condition thou art now in, yet not too filthy for him to come to thee, to wash thee with the Washing of Regeneration: And to enable thee to come, as filthy as thou art, or canst be, have been cleansed; some of those many Thousands which are now before the Throne in White Robes, who now have neither Spot nor Wrinkle, did once, while on Earth, wear  
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Garments that were exceeding filthy: They are not so pure and spotless now, but they were as filthy and polluted once. Christ wants not a Vertue to cleanse thee, if thou wantest not a Heart to receive him, and to make use of that Vertue that is in him.

And as there is this cleansing Vertue in Christ, so it is no where to be found but in him; for it is not enough under this, or any other, Head; to shew you what Vertue is in Christ, unless I also shew you that those Vertues are to be found only in him: For there was something more in *Sharon's* Rose than in other Roses, as I hinted. This cleansing Vertue is not to be derived from Duties, or any Performances of ours, tho' good in themselves. Could we live so purely, that for the time to come we could contract no more Defilement, yet we could not with Nytre or much Soap wash off that Defilement that is already upon our Hands, nor yet the Filth that is in the Heart; if Christ wash us not we can have no Part in him. Oh then, since there is this Vertue in Christ, and only in him, thou that are yet in thy Blood, beg of him to wash thee, and say, Lord, If thou wilt thou canst make me clean. Plead hard that gracious Promise, *Ezek. 36. 25. Then will I sprinkle clean Water upon you, and ye shall be clean from all your Filthiness, and from all your Idols will I cleanse you;* and know, it will be but a little while that this Fountain will be open: the Time is at hand when Christ will say, *He that is filthy, let him be filthy still,* *Rev. 22. 11.* And what a Wound will it be to thee to see others cleansed, who once were as unclean as thou art, whilst thou must remain in thy Sins.

4. There is in Christ, this Rose of Sharon, a Pardoning Vertue that is suited to Guilty, Condemned, Souls. So long as we remain under the Power and Dominion of Sin, we are under Condemnation for Sin ; and in this State we Naturally all of us are, as is clear from *Rom. 5. 18. As by the Offence of one Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation, &c.* Who is that one? Why, the First *Adam* ; he being a Publick Person, no sooner brought Condemnation upon himself, but he laid all his Posterity liable to the same ; hence we are said to be by *Nature Children of Wrath, Eph. 2. 3.* that is, such as deserve Wrath as soon as Born : But now Christ hath a Pardoning Vertue in him, *1 John 1. 7. And the Blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all Sin.* Christ saw all the Race of *Adam* as Condemned Malefactors, going to be Executed, and then said, *Lo, I come* ; he died, *The Just for the Unjust (a)*, and by his Blood satisfied Divine Justice, and so procured a Ransom. He was as the Ram caught in the Thicket to Rescue us, who, like *Isaac*, were going to be Offered up (b) ; he was wounded for our Transgressions ; and O the Pardoning Vertue that is in his Blood ! That's a sweet Text, and full to this Purpose, *Col. 2. 14. Blotting out the Hand-writing of Ordinances that was against us, which was contrary unto us, and took it out of the Way, nailing it to his Cross.* Our Sins were as a Bond or Hand-writing ; but that it might not be put to Suit, Christ blotted out the Sum ; and lest that should not be sure enough, he took it out of the Way ; and that nothing might yet be wanting for

(a) *1 Pet. 3. 18.*(b) *Gen. 22. 13.*

for the securing our Discharge, he nailed it to his Cross. In Allusion to the Custom in those Times and Places, of Cancelling their Writings, by piercing them with a Nail, as we do by tearing off the Seals; so that it denotes thus much, that if that Handwriting which he had blotted out, and taken out of the Way, should chance to be found, and read too, yet being nailed through, should be of no Force against us.

When Christ was on the Cross, he made a Plenary Satisfaction to Divine Justice for all the Sins of all the Elect to the World's end; that when they come by Grace to be enabled to believe in him, they might have that applied to them which before was purchased for them. Hence saith the Apostle, *Rom. 8. 1.* *There is therefore now no Condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.* No Condemnation, as a Great Man Glosses on the Text, is as much as not one Condemnation; there is not one Sin we commit but deserves a Condemnation; every vain Thought, every idle Word, every foolish and sinful Action, deserves a Condemnation; but such is the Pardoning Vertue that is in the Blood of Christ, that there is not one Condemnation to them that are in him. Nay, our Dear Lord, who best knew the Vertue of his own Blood, goes yet farther, and tells us, such shall not come into Condemnation (c). When a Malefactor is pardoned for one Fault, he may afterwards commit another, for which he may die; and his former Pardon may do him no good, however dearly it might be purchased: But when Christ gives us a Pardon Sealed with his own Blood, it secures us for the Time to come. And

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(c) *John 5. 24.*

let me say this, for the Honour of Christ, and for the Comfort of you who are truly in him by Faith, there is no more danger of your being Condemned for Sin, than if you had never committed any Sin. I do not say you need not fear Sin, nor yet that you need not fear God's Correcting Rod for your Sins; for he may *Visit your Iniquity with the Rod, and your Sins with Stripes*, and may make you learn Obedience by the things you suffer; but you need not fear being Condemned for Sin: You may Challenge all your Enemies to bring in an Indictment against you, and say, as in *Rom. 8. 33, 34. Who shall lay any thing to the Charge of God's Elect*: That is, his Called Ones, as Verse 30. and then adds the Reason, *It is God that justifieth, and Christ that died*; and that was Security enough. Good Man, he was not without his Failings no more than other Saints, as you may read in *Rom. 7.* at large; and therefore it was not his Inherent Perfection that was the Ground of that Challenge, but a firm belief of his Interest in the Pardoning Blood of the Lord Jesus. Oh! How many Thousand Souls have been Pardoned by this Blood, many of which are now before the Throne, singing to him that loved them, and washed away their Sins in his own Blood? *Rev. 1. 5.* And how can we once doubt whether this Vertue is in him, when so many have received the same Vertue from him?

Neither is this Vertue to be found in any thing but in Christ, this sweet Rose of *Sharon*. Never was a Pardon dispenced to any Soul since the World began, but what was Signed and Sealed with his Blood, *Heb. 9. 22, for without shedding of Blood there is no Remission*: Here, and only here, it is that a Guilty Conscience, pressed down under a



Sense of Sin, must betake it self for Ease, this is the only City of Refuge for such a Soul : Nothing will truly pacifie a Guilty, Wounded Conscience, but a Sight of a Wounded, Dying Jesus, dying for him. Oh! The sad Mistakes some make ; some think, with *Simon*, to buy the Gifts of God with Money (*d*), and go to *Rome* for Pardons ; others, under no less dangerous Mistake, think to work it out with the hard Labour of their own Hands ; and if God will Pardon what is past, they hope to be able some time or other to make him amends ; but take heed of this Soul-damning Mistake, to think there is Vertue enough in their Prayers or Tears, or in any Works of Righteousness which you have done, or can do, to purchase Pardon for the least Sin ; for tho' such as do sincerely Repent, and turn from Sin, have good Evidence they are Pardoned, yet these are not the Cause of their Pardon, but rather the Effects. Take heed then of going about to Establish your own Righteousness : You may fancy of building a Tower whose height may reach unto Heaven, of your own Brick and Lime, to make your Name renowned on Earth, and to secure you from any after Flood that may arise ; but alas, you'll all be confounded before your *Babel's* finished. Your *Dagon* cannot stand long before God's Ark. Give over this foolish Building in time, lest to thy shame Men laugh at thee e'er long, saying, this Man began to build, but was not able to finish, since 'tis only for the sake of Christ's Righteousness imputed to us, and not for Righteousness in us, or done by us, that God Pardons any Soul. You have one remarkable Text for many, that may serve to beat down all

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(d) *Acts* 8. 18.

46 *Christ the most Excellent :*

our Confidence in the Flesh, *Rev. 7. 14, 15. These are they which came out of great Tribulation, and have washed their Robes, and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb, therefore are they before the Throne.* You see they had been great Sufferers ; yet it was not for their Doings nor Sufferings that they were before the Throne ; but because they had washed their Robes, and made them White in the Blood of the Lamb : And had it not been for this, those that suffered so much in this World might have suffered much more in the next.

The Consideration of this Grand Gospel-Truth made the Apostle say, *Philip. 3. 8, 9, 10. Yea, doubtless I do count all things but Loss for the Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord, for whom I have suffered the Loss of all things, and do count them but Dung that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having my own Righteousness, &c.* We may observe in the foregoing Verses, he had been giving an Account, not only of his Birth, Priviledge, but also how much he had done concerning the Law blameless ; and then gives us an Account of his Sufferings ; and indeed they were very great ; he had suffered the Loss of all, and I am sure no Man can suffer more ; and counts all but Dung for Christ. He saw all his Doings and Sufferings would avail him nothing in Point of Justification ; and if he durst not expect Pardon and Life for his Righteousness, how dare we be found in ours ? Had some one of us the Righteousness of all the Saints on Earth, if that was all, we could no more answer the Demands of Justice, than he that wanted the Wedding Garment could answer that Question, *Friend, how camest thou in hither ? Matth. 22. 12.* and 'tis said *he was speechless ;*

less; and so shall we if we are not Cloathed with that Wedding-Garment which he wanted.

Let me entreat thee therefore, whoever thou art that readeſt this, to ſee if thou art intereſted in this Pardoning Blood; and know, if Juſtice is not ſatisfied by this Blood, it will require thy Blood; if thou doſt not take hold on Chriſt, Juſtice will take hold on thee; and for Non-payment will caſt thee into Priſon, where thou muſt lye till thou haſt paid the very laſt Mite (e). Were we but ſenſible of the worth of Pardon, how highly ſhould we eſteem Chriſt upon the account of this Vertue that is in him?

5. There is a Healing Vertue in Chriſt, this Roſe of *Sharon*, ſuited unto Diſeaſed, Sick, and Wounded Souls. Oh the Diſeaſes our Souls labour under! There is no found Part in them; *The whole Head is Sick, and the whole Heart is Faint; from the Sole of the Foot unto the Head there is no Soundneſs, but Wounds and Bruiſes, and putriſying Sores* (f). And were we but ſenſible of our Wounds, we ſhould moſt earneſtly long for Cure. Now Chriſt hath a Healing Vertue in himſelf: 'Tis obſerved that Roſes have in them an excellent Vertue to recover from inward Weakneſs and Decay; and ſure I am, there is a Vertue in this ſweet Roſe of *Sharon* to Heal, when our Inward Man is never ſo Corrupt, and Impaired by Diſeaſes; yea, when our Wounds even Stink and are Corrupt, and all other Phyſicians are of no Value. This Healing Vertue in Chriſt is excellently ſet forth in Two Places Typically; one in *Numb.* 21. where you read how the ſtung *Iſraelites* were to look to the

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(e) *Luke* 12, 59.

(f) *Iſa.* 1. 6.

Brazen Serpent; and 'tis said, *When any Man looked, he lived*; tho' his Wound was never so Dangerous, and never so full of Smart and Anguish, yet immediately upon looking, without any Application of any Plaister, or any other Medicine, he was healed; and this Christ applies to himself, *John 3. 14.* to shew that by believing in him we shall be as certainly cured in our Souls, as they were in their Bodies, by looking to the Brazen Serpent. Another Text to the same purpose you have, *John 5. 3, &c.* where you read of a *great Multitude*, all of them impotent Folk, some Blind, some Lame, some Withered, and yet after the Angel moved the Waters, *whosoever first stepp'd in was made whole of whatsoever Disease he had*; to denote, that whatsoever Diseases our Souls labour under, Christ the Angel of the Covenant can cure all. Hence Christ is called a Physician, *Matth. 9. 12.* *They that are whole need not the Physician, &c.* And indeed he is a skilful one; he better knows our Spiritual Diseases in the true Cause, Nature, and Effects of them, than the most skilful and experienc'd Physician doth the Diseases of our Bodies; and as he knows them, so he hath a Plaister for every Sore, and a speedy Remedy for every Disease; and the Vertue of all is from himself. So that we may say in this Case as she in another, *Matth. 9. 21.* *If I may but touch his Garment I shall be whole*: So tho' our Souls are languishing, yet the least touch by the Hand of Faith will derive Healing Vertue from him. 'Tis said of Christ in the Days of his Flesh, *That he healed every Sickness, and every Disease, among the People, Matth. 9. 35.* And sure Christ is able to cure all the Diseases of our Souls now in Heaven. Christ, when he heals, he will not do

it slightly; he will not only Skin over the Wound, but will make a thorough Cure of it: Yea, he so Cures, that his Patients shall never die of those, or any Distemper after. A Physician Cures his Patients of one Distemper, and anon is sent to for another; and at last the Men dies, while the Physician stands and looks on, and tells all about him he can do no more for him. But now it is not thus with Christ; he never undertook any but he cured them; he never had one Patient died in his Hands: They may indeed after he had cured them have some ill Fits return for a while; but they shall not prove unto Death, but for the Glory of God, *John 11. 26. He that believeth in me shall never die*; his Soul shall never die or perish. You that have diseas'd Souls, and who have not, why do you not make use of this Rose of Sharon? Why do you not come to this Great Physician? If you find any Illness in your Bodies, or Distemper breaking forth there, how do you send for a Physician? What Cost are you at? And what bitter Potions do you drink down, and all for Health? Nor can any blame you in so doing; for what Comfort can a Diseas'd Person take in all his Earthly Enjoyments? Health is more to be prized than all these. But what Reason can be given why as much Care should not be taken of the Soul? *As the Body is more than Raiment, so the Soul is more than the Body*: And sure I am, thou canst never take any true Comfort in the Enjoyments of this Life till the Diseases of the Soul are cured. O then make haste unto this Spiritual Physician, he will cure all that come freely; nor will he put you to any more Pain than needs must. He is a Tender-hearted Physician, he will bind up thy Wounds softly, and will deal gently

by thee; but if thou refuselt to make use of this Rose of *Sharon*, thy Wound will prove Incurable, and thy Disease Mortal: If Christ do not help thee in this Case, others cannot. They may apply somewhat proper to thy Body, but so hard a matter is it to Cure Spiritual Maladies, that the most Skilful Physician cannot prepare a Plaster that will stick here.

6. There is in Christ, this Rose of *Sharon*, a Beautifying Vertue for Deformed Souls. When God Created *Adam*, it was after his own Image; and O! how Lovely and Beautiful then was he while that remained? No Deformity in him; God then greatly delighted in his own Workmanship; but no sooner did Sin enter, but he lost his Comeliness. Every Sin being a Blemish to the Soul, and as Dirt thrown upon a fair Face, which marr'd all his Beauty; and as *Adam*, had he not sinned, would have conveyed that Beautiful Image to all his Posterity; (we being in his Loins) so having sinned, and defaced that Image, we all partake of the same: Hence we are said to bear the Image of the Earthly, 1 Cor. 15. 49. And were we but sensible of our Deformity, and what ill-shapen Monsters we came into the World, it would make us say as *Job* 42. 6. *Wherefore I abhor my self:* The Spouse herself, as sensible of her Deformity in her self, hides her self in the Clefts of the Rock, as one asham'd that Christ should behold her Countenance, *Cant.* 2. 14.

But now Christ, as he is most Beautiful in himself, and altogether Lovely, so he hath Vertue in him to make us Beautiful too; and as by our bearing *Adam's* Earthly Image we became Deformed; so by bearing the Image of the Second *Adam*, the Lord from Heaven, our Beauty is in some measure

measure restored. I have shewed you under the last Head, that Christ had a healing Vertue for wounded Souls, but to make us Beautiful is more. Men may heal a Wound, and yet leave such a Scar as may for ever spoil all our Beauty; but now Christ not only heals our Wounds, but makes us Comely and Beautiful. Saith the Spouse, *I am Black, but Comely*, Cant. 1.5. As if she had said, When I behold my natural Face in the pure Glass of thy Word, I appear Black; but when I look upon my self as in Christ, I am Comely, thro' the Comeliness which he hath put upon me. Nor did this proceed from an overfond Conceit the Spouse had of her own Beauty. But it is wonderful to consider of what Christ himself saith of her in this respect, Chap. 6. 4. *Thou art Beautiful, O my Love, as Tirzah*; and then adds, Vers. 5. *Turn away thine Eyes from me; for they have overcome me*: So Chap. 7. 1. *How Beautiful are thy Feet with Shoes, O Princes Daughter?* The Feet, you know, are the most Contemptible Part, and yet, saith Christ, how Beautiful are thy Feet? And lest any thing should yet be wanting to set forth her Beauty, saith he, *Thou art all Fair, my Love, there is no Spot in thee*, Chap. 4. 7. And, as at first, so long as we continued in that Image, in which we were Created, God greatly delighted in us: So now Christ hath put this Comeliness upon us, he again delights in our Beauty, and seems very desirous of our Love, Chap. 4. 9, 10. *Thou hast ravished my Heart, my Sister, my Spouse; thou hast ravished my Heart, with one of thine Eyes, with one Chain of thy Neck: How Fair is thy Love, my Sister, my Spouse? How much better is thy Love than Wine?* &c. And even when the Spouse was hiding herself, as ashamed of her own Blackness;

ness, *Cant.* 2. 14. How kindly doth Christ call upon her to come out? *Let me see thy Countenance, let me hear thy Voice, for Sweet is thy Voice; and thy Countenance is Comely: As if he had said, However Deformed or Contemptible thou mayst be in thy own sight, yet thou art Comely in my sight. Hence this great King is said greatly to desire the Saints Beauty, Psal.* 45. 11. Their Beauty indeed doth not appear to the World, the Saints are looked upon by them *to be as the very filth and off-scouring of all things (g).* Tho' the King's Daughter is all glorious, yet it is within, and out of the sight of the World; that which renders them most Amiable in Christ's sight, renders them most Contemptible in the sight of the World; and no wonder they see no Beauty in us, when they saw none in Christ, *Isa.* 53. 2. And if they were so dim-sighted that they could see no Light in the bright Sun, no wonder if they cannot discern the Light of a twinkling Star. But Christ he sees the Saints Beauty, and he will make others to see it too, when he comes to present his Spouse *a glorious Church, not having Spot or Wrinkle, or any such thing (h);* then the Beauty of the Bride, the Lamb's Wife, will appear, when she hath fully made her self ready, and put on her best Robes.

Thus you see there is a beautifying Vertue in this Sweet Rose of *Sharon*; and one would think every one should be desirous to partake of it: Oh! how industrious are the Carnal World to render themselves Comely and Beautiful in the Eyes of Men? What Trimming and Decking, what Powdering, Painting, Patching and Dressing, and it may be, more time spent in beholding their *Jezebel's*



bel's Faces in a Glass, than in looking into the Glass of the Word. And yet, after all, they are but as whited Walls, and painted Sepulchres, which only appear Beautiful to Men (i); they have Deformed Leprous Souls within a Beautiful Body: Nor can all their Time and Cost thus spent render them Beautiful in Christ's sight, but rather Contemptible; for *he knows the Proud afar off*, Ps. 138. 6. If then you would be truly Beautiful, if you would have the better Part Comely in God's sight, throw away your Paint, and make use of the Rose of *Sharon*.

7. There is in Christ, this Sweet Rose of *Sharon*, a Comforting Vertue for Dejected, Sorrowful, Souls: A Man out of Christ can have no true Comfort; he may laugh indeed, but cannot be said to rejoice: He may fitly be compared to the Picture of a Man in a laughing Posture. Of such as these it may often be said, as in *Prov. 14. 13. Even in laughter the Heart is sorrowful, and the end of that Mirth is Heaviness.* So long as a Man is out of Christ, he is under Condemnation, lying upon the Brink of Eternal Burnings: And what Comfort can there be in this State? But now, when a Soul comes to receive Christ, he receives him whose Consolations are not small (k). This sweet Rose will Comfort us; you have a full Text to this purpose, *Isa. 61. 3. To appoint to them that mourn in Sion, to give unto them Beauty for Ashes, the Oil of Joy for Mourning; the Garments of Praise for the Spirit of Heaviness;* which Words are evidently spoken of Christ, as you may see in *Luke 4. 18. 21.* And as it was one great End of his coming to Comfort Mourners

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(i) *Mat. 23. 27.* (k) *Job 15. 11.*

ers in *Sion*; so he is well Qualified for that Work; he is called *the Consolation of Israel*, *Luke 2. 25.* As if they had no Comfort besides. The Creatures can afford a Soul no true and solid Comfort, if Christ is not enjoyed with them. But, Oh! the sweet Comforts that flow into the Soul, when Christ is ours; and when we can say, *My Beloved is mine, and I am his.* Let a Soul be never so Dejected, tho' as it were Sorrowful, even unto Death, yet if even thou, Christ, will but say, Son, Daughter, be of Comfort, thy Sins are forgiven, what Joy will it cause? We must be sorrowful indeed; Who will not rejoice when Christ comes to put his Left Hand under our Head, and when his Right Hand doth embrace us. And, O! what Dunghil Delights are the Delights of this World; if compared to what the Soul finds in Christ? Says the Spouse, *Cant. 7. 11. Come, my Beloved, let us go forth into the Fields, let us lodge within the Villages:* As if she had said, Let us retire from the Noise of this vain World, let us go aside more privately, and there solace our selves in Love: As if she had said, I still find more Comfort in thee, than in all I can leave for thee; therefore come, my Beloved, let us go forth, &c. How hath the Comfort the Saints have found in Christ, supported them under, and even lifted them sometimes above, the Fear of Death, yea, of the most violent Death? I doubt not but you have read or heard of the Martyr that went drooping to the Stake, but when in the Flames he clapt his Hands, saying, *He is come, he is come.* Observe, he had more Comfort when in the Flames with the Presence of Christ, than he had before when without it; and what strong Consolation must such Souls find, that could thus Transport them,

them, that in the Flames they should, as it were, feel no Pain? This calls to mind a Memorable Passage I have read of another Martyr, who "when he felt the Fire begin to burn, began to sing; the Executioner bid him not to glory, he replied in the Words of the Apostle, *Gal. 6. 14. God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of my Lord Jesus Christ.* But, said he, I cannot but tell you, that while you kindle the Fire, methinks you strow Roses under my Feet; and sure it was the Rose of *Sharon* that so Comforted him. You that are Saints, I hope I am not speaking to you Mysteries, but that which you can conceive of, and have in some measure found in your own Souls; the World, I know, cannot receive those Sayings, *A Stranger doth not intermeddle with his Joys,* *Prov. 14. 10.* But, I am perswaded, there are bur few Saints but have at least tasted of those Comforts, and have found them as far exceeding all the vain and frothy Delights and Comforts of this World, as the best tuned Musick, managed by the most Skilful Hand, doth excel the unpleasent Noise of the howling of Dogs. Saints, have not you been helped to say (at least some time, as in *Hab. 3. 17, 18. Altho' the Fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall Fruit be in the Vine, &c. yet will I joy in the Lord, and rejoice in the God of my Salvation.*

But methinks I hear some dejected Soul replying thus, If the Saints do find such Comforts in Christ, I fear I am not in Christ, for I scarce know what those Comforts mean: I am oft Mourning like the Doves.

To which I Answer; Suppose it is so, yet this no ways opposes the Truth I have laid down: there may be a Comforting Vertue in Christ, tho' all

all do not derive it from him. The sweetest Rose will not refresh us, tho' sweet in it self, unless we use it; so if we would feel in our Souls the Comforting Vertue that is in Christ, we must lay hold on him by a lively Faith. But because possibly thou may'st not from hence so much question this Vertue being in him, as whether thou thy self art by Faith united to him, I further Answer, Tho' there is doubtless such Vertue in Christ, yet all the Saints do not equally partake of it. *There may be Mourners, even in Sion (l).* There may be true Faith, yea, strong Faith, where there is weak Comforts: Thou may'st fear the Lord, and obey the voice of his Servants, and yet sit in Darkness, and see no Light, *Isa. 50. 10.* and that, you know, is an Uncomfortable State and Condition. Thou canst not conclude thy State is nought, because thou hast not the same Measure of Comfort which some Saints have: For as one may be wearied with hard Labour; another is carried at the Sides and dandled upon the Knees, and yet both belong to the same Family, and be Children of the same Father: So in this Case, all the Saints, tho' equally safe, yet have not all the same frame of Spirit; some go Triumphant and Singing in *Sion's Way*; he loved me, and gave himself for me, *Gal. 2. 20.* And saying with *Job*, *I know that my Redeemer liveth, &c. (m)*, mean while others go Sobbing and Sighing most of their Way, with Tears running down their Faces, fearing lest they should fall short of Heaven, thro' an evil Heart of unbelief, and yet doth at last meet together in their Master's Joy. And as one Traveller may have a smoother Way, and more clear Sun-

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(l) *Isai. 61. 3.* (m) *Job 19. 25.*

Sunshine than another, yet both may get to their Journeys end; so in this Case. But lest some should from hence conclude themselves to be better than indeed they are, I must tell you, That in my Judgment there are but few (if any) that are right in the Way, but what have some Clusters sent them before they come to profess the good Land. If therefore thou art wholly a Stranger to those Consolations in Christ, let it put thee upon the greater search into thy own Heart.

8. There is in Christ, this sweet Rose of *Sharon*, a strengthening Vertue for weak and feeble Souls; when any Soul hath received life from Christ, it still wants strength: For, as a weak and feeble Person is not fit for Work, tho' alive; so the Work the Saints have to do for God here in this World is so great, and their strength to perform it so little, that they would even faint under Christ's Burden, if wholly left to themselves. O! the Difficulties some do meet with, and we may meet with, in the Way to Heaven; while the Way to Destruction is broad and easie, the Way to Heaven is narrow, the Gate straight, Hindrances many. Here must be fighting if we hope to overcome, wrestling with Principalities and Powers (n) if we will win the Prize, striving if we will enter (o), running if we will obtain (p). *The Kingdom of Heaven suffers violence, and the Violent take it by force*, Matt. 11. 12. When the Saints look before them, and consider what they are like to meet with, when they look within them, and find their own strength but to sit still, how are they sometimes almost ready to despair of holding out?

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(n) *Eph.* 6. 12. (o) *Luke* 13. 24. (p) *1 Cor.* 9. 24.

But now Christ, this Rose of *Sharon*, hath a strengthening Vertue, and such as are in him shall be Conquerors, and more than Conquerors, *Rom. 8. 37.* He is not only the Lord our Righteousness to Justifie us, but the Lord our Strength to Support us, *Isa. 45. 24. Surely shall one say, in the Lord have I Righteousness and Strength, &c.* Alas, of our selves we have neither Strength to do or to suffer, but yet we can do all things thro' Christ that strengthens us, *Phil. 4. 13.* So that we may say as Paul, *When I am weak, then am I strong, 2 Cor. 12. 10.* He need not fear being overcome for want of Strength, that is secured in those Everlasting Arms. O the strengthening Vertue that many have derived from Christ, this Rose of *Sharon!* 'Tis said of some, *Heb. 11. 34. That out of weakness they were made strong;* 'tis not said such as were weak, but out of weakness were made strong; and then mentions some Women, who, you know, are the weaker Vessels. Well, but it may be there was no way for them to avoid the suffering; yes, 'tis said, not accepting Deliverance, *vers. 35.* But were they not Fool-hardy not to accept of Deliverance when offered to them? No, not on their Terms: They would rather honour Christ by dying, than dishonour him by living; and all this they did by Faith. How little did good *Stephen* regard the Stones that flew so thick about his Ears, when he saw Jesus sitting at the Right Hand of God? *Acts 7. latter end.* I shall rehearse a Passage worth your remembrance, that I have read of a young Man that suffered Martyrdom at *Burntwood*, in *Essex*, as I remember: He was Condemned at *London*, in Queen *Mary's* Days, and then sent down to be Executed at his native Place, to be the greater Terror to his

Aged Parents then living. Some time before his Execution, some of his Christian Acquaintance desired him, for their Encouragement, that if he found the Torments tollerable, in his greatest Extremity, he would give this Sign, to hold up his Hand; he consented. They accompanied him to the Stake, staid there till they thought he had been dead; but when all their hopes began to fail, his Body being almost Consumed, he then lift up his Hand, to the great Joy of those that knew what it meant. O! What a sweet Encouragement may those things be to us who stand in the Strength of Christ; we may be sure as our Day is, so shall our Strength be; nor will he *suffer us to be tempted above what we are able to bear* (q). He hath promised, *Gen. 43. 2. When thou passest thro' the Waters, I will be with thee; and thro' the Rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest thro' the Fire thou shalt not be burnt, &c.* Great Afflictions are oft set forth by Fire and Water, as I might shew. Now since there is such a strengthening Vertue in Christ, the Saints may Sing in the greatest Danger, as the Apostle, *Rom. 8. 35. to the end; Who shall separate us from the Love of Christ?* And then reckons up such things which were as like to cool our Love to him as any thing: *Shall Tribulation, or Distress, or Persecutions, or Famine, or Nakedness, or Peril, or Sword, &c.* And adds, Verse the 37th, *In all these things we are more than Conquerors, through him that loved us.* Hold on then, Dear Saints, in the Way, tho' narrow; for when thy Heart and thy Flesh fail, Christ will be thy Strength.

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(q) 1 Cor. 10. 13.

9. There is in Christ, this sweet Rose of *Sharon*, a nourishing Vertue suited unto hungry Souls; we have Souls as well as Bodies, and the former must have Food as well as the latter, or else they will pine away, and grow lean from Day to Day: Now tho' there are variety of Creatures for the nourishment of the Body, and satisfying of our Corporal Appetite, yet none of those suit with the Soul; that being a spiritual Substance, must have Food suited to its Nature; those things are of too inferiour a Nature to satisfie a spiritual Appetite. How many have well-fed Bodies, and yet starving Souls? How many are like *Dives*, that fared sumptuously, and that every Day, and yet for want of spiritual Food, or at least for want of an Appetite to relish it, are like to fare no better than he in the end, when *in Hell he lifted up his Eyes, being Tormented in the Flames?* Luke 16. 23. Poor Rich Man, had he had more Love for his Soul, tho' he had fared as hardly as *Lazarus*, he had been a Rich Man indeed.

Well, as spiritual Food is necessary, so Christ is suitable Food for us; and blessed are they that hunger after him, for they shall be satisfied (r). That Tree of Life which grows in the midst of the Paradise of God hath Fruit that is good for Food, as well as a Leaf for Medicine, *Ezek. 47. 12. Rev. 22. 2.* Christ is our spiritual *Joseph*; you know *Pharaoh* committed all the Store of the Land into the Hand of *Joseph*, and to him they must go for Food, or Starve. So all our Store of spiritual Food is treasured up in Christ, *John-6. 35. I am the Bread of Life*; and as Bread in Scripture contains all Food necessary for the Body, so Christ contains

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(r) *Matt. 5. 6.*



contains in him all Provision suitable for the Soul. Christ hath a Banqueting-House to Feast his Beloved Spouse in (s), he hath a Feast of Fat Things to Entertain his Guests. You read in *Luke 14. 16, 17.* of a Feast where all things are ready, and there can be no want where all things are ready; and doubtless this sets forth that abundant Fulness of spiritual Provision that is in Christ for the Soul. Ah! Sirs, till we are nourished by this Food, we do but with the Prodigal feed on Husks; but when we come to Christ we shall find Bread enough, and to spare; this Master of the House is well stored with Provision for all his Family, even for the many Thousands of *Israel*: He keeps a Table richly decked; he hath Food suited to the spiritual Appetite of all his Children: He hath Meat for strong Men: But if any are not able to bear that, he hath Milk for Babes (t). O! taste and see that the Lord is gracious, and then you Nauseate all the Delights of the World, if compared to this Food; then you will say, his Flesh is Meat indeed (v). The Carnal World indeed, they have no Appetite to this Food; they can taste more sweetness in a Lust; that suits best with their fleshly Appetite. When our Lord entered upon a Discourse with the Pharisees concerning this Matter, as you may read, *John 6.* at large, what gross Conceptions had they about it? *How can this Man give us his Flesh to eat (u)?* A Carnal Man knows no more of this than *Nicodemus* of the new Birth. 'Tis hidden Manna that the Saints are fed with. You read in *Judges 14.* how *Sampson* found Honey in the Carcase of a Lion; and he put forth a Riddle to the *Philistines*, which

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(s) *Cant.* 2. 4. (t) *1 Cor.* 3. 2. (v) *John* 6:55. (u) *John* 6. 52.

he was confident they could never unfold, that out of the Eater should come forth Meat, and out of the Strong should come forth Sweetness ; and indeed, it was such a Riddle that Men should receive strength from that which had destroyed so many, that they had never found it out, if they had not been taught by her that lay in his Bosom. No less Mysterious is it to the unbelieving World, that the many Thousands of *Israel* should be nourished out of the dead Lion of the Tribe of *Judah* (*w*), and that the Death of another should be the Means of Life ; and that that which is in it self so bitter, should afford such sweetness : Nor will they, with all their Wisdom, be able to unfold this Riddle. Do not we see how the Papists, this Day, have as Carnal Conceptions of this Mytery, as the Pharisees had of Old ; for, being Strangers to the Life of Faith, they not only believe that his Flesh is Meat indeed, which the Scripture affirms, but also that the Bread, with which the Saints are fed at Christ's Table, is his very Flesh indeed : They cannot once conceive of any other way of eating Christ's Flesh but Corporally : So that tho' there is such a Vertue in Christ to nourish the Soul, yet many know nothing of this Feast of Fat Things.

10. There is in Christ a satisfying Vertue, suited to thirsty Souls ; our Hearts are naturally Thirsting after this World, and the Delights and Pleasures of it. And yet, after all, we find here are no Enjoyments in this World, whether Lawful or Unlawful, that can fully satisfy the vast Desires of the Soul. VVhen the Voluptuous Man hath drank deepest into the sinful Delights and Pleasures of  
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this VWorld, he is still thirsting after more, crying, *Give, give.*: He finds his Cisterns broken, and that they can hold no VWater (x). So the Covetous Man, he joins House to House and Field to Field, and calls his Lands after his own Name, and yet is, after all, as much unsatisfied, and oftentimes more, than they which have not so much as to set their Foot upon, *Eccles.* 4. 8. and *Chap.* 5. 10.

But now Christ hath a satisfying Vertue, and that we shall find when we do by Faith receive him: His Blood is Drink indeed, as well as his Flesh Meat indeed, *John* 6. 35. He hath Wine on the Lees to drink, as well as Fat Things to eat, *Isai.* 55. 1. *Ho, every one that Thirsteth, come ye to the Waters, &c.* So *John* 7. 37. *In the great Day of the Feast Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any Man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.* Christ is called a Fountain, *Ezek.* 13. 1. *In that Day there shall be a Fountain opened, &c.* Yea, he is an inexhaustable Fountain. It is observed by Physicians, that in the most vehement Thirst which ariseth from Indisposition of Body, the Water distilled from Roses is of excellent use to abate it: And, sure I am, there is a Vertue in the Rose of *Sharon* for thirsty Souls. As such are called to him to come and drink, so when they do come they shall certainly find this satisfying Vertue in him. *John* 4. 13, 14. *Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this Water shall thirst again; but whosoever drinketh of the Water that I shall give him, shall never thirst, &c.* i. e. He shall find such a satisfying Vertue in me, that he shall never so eagerly pursue after the Creature

(x) *Fer.* 2. 13.

ture as before. I might have enlarged, but lest I should be thought tedious I proceed.

Thus I have shown you, how Christ may be compared to a Rose, and some of those excellent Vertues that are in this sweet Rose of *Sharon*: But before I come to my Doctrine, there is one thing more I must do, or else I shall come short of what I may do, and ought to do, for the setting forth the Glory and Excellency of Christ, and that is, to shew you wherein Christ excels a Rose, tho' it be the Rose of *Sharon*; and, as I hinted at first, in drawing a Picture, when all is done that can be, something will be wanting; so when I have used all the Similitudes I can to set forth the Excellency of Christ, much more may be said than is said. I remember a Passage I have read, reported by *Niceferus*, that *Agbarus*, a great Man that lived in the Days of Christ's Flesh, who, hearing of his Miracles, sent a Limner to draw his Picture; but when he came, his Countenance so dazled his Eyes, that he could not perform his Work: How true that is I know not, but sure I am, all that is in Christ cannot be set forth by the Creatures; there being no Creature in Heaven or Earth that can in every thing parallel this King of Glory: We cannot rationally expect to find as much in a mutable Creature, as is to be found in the glorious Creator; and was it not that Christ himself hath made use of such Similitudes to discover somewhat of his Excellency to us, I should have thought it high Presumption to compare him to a Creature, tho' the best of Creatures; well knowing those Glasses are too dim to let us see all his Glory. But tho' Christ is pleased to make use of Metaphors, and therein not a little condescends to our Weakness, yet he doth it not that

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we should think these can fully set forth his Excellency; for it would be no small Disparagement to Christ for us once to suppose, there can be as much in the Work of his Hands, as is in himself. He expects that when we have seen as much of him in these as we can, we should still by Faith believe that to be in him, which none of these can discover of him. Now as there is no Similitude among the Creatures, but what will come short in this Case, and can do no otherwise; so tho' perhaps a Rose may as nearly resemble him as any such Inferior Creature, yet in many things this will come short also.

I told you the Roses of *Sharon* excelled other Roses, yet not so much as Christ excels them. I shall therefore in a few Particulars show you, as I am able, some Excellent Properties in Christ, which are not to be found in any Rose, no, not in the Rose of *Sharon*.

1. Christ excels a Rose, yea, the best of Roses, in this respect; Roses, tho' delightful, are yet subject to fade, wither and decay: If you pluck them fresh and flourishing in the Morning, they wither and fade before Night: Or, if a cold and churlish blast comes, how soon are they nipt, and lose their Beauty and sweet Savour, and, in a short time, their Vertue too; and are good for nothing but to be trodden under foot. But 'tis not so with Christ; he is always Flourishing, he hath no Wrinkle in his Beautiful Face, nor the least sign of Decay: See what the Apostle stiles him, *Heb. 13. 8. Jesus Christ, the same Yesterday, to Day, and for Ever.* Mind, he is the same to Day, he was Yesterday, or in time past, for that's the meaning; and will be for ever what he is to

Day ; as his Years change not, so neither doth he ; he is not capable of any Vicissitudes ; he is an ever-flowing, as well as an over-flowing, Fountain ; 'tis he of whom it is said, Rev. 1. 8. *Who is, and who was, and who is to come.* No Rose comparable to him in this respect, Isa. 40. 7, 8. *The Grass withereth, the Flower fadeth, but the Word of our God shall stand for ever.* The Apostle Peter cites those very Words, 1 Pet. 1. 24. and there explains what we are to understand by the Word of God, Vers. 25. *And this is the Word which by the Gospel is preached unto you,* that is, Christ the Essential and Eternal Word : For 'tis he which in the Gospel is preached unto us ; and 'tis said he abideth for ever. As for Man, he is a poor mutable Creature ; 'tis said, *he cometh up as a Flower, and is cut down (y) ;* but Christ abideth the same for ever : Neither Time nor Eternity will make any change in him. And further, I told you, a Rose is not only subject to wither, but in time to lose its inward Vertue, as well as outward Beauty ; so is not Christ. Christ is fitly compared to the Sun, never to the Moon ; not only to show how we have all our Light from him, but to teach us, that as the Moon is continually varying, sometime a greater Light, and sometime a less, and sometime almost none ; sometime in the Full, and sometime in the Wain, while the Sun is always the same : So while Creatures fade, and at last, as a Taper burn out, Christ is always the same, and hath the same Vertue in him, saith the Apostle, 1 Pet. 2. 9. *But you are a chosen Generation, a royal Priesthood, a peculiar People, that you should shew forth the Praises of him, &c.* The word Prai-  
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(y) Job 14. 2.

ses, is in the *Greek*, Vertues, and is the same Word you have, *Phil.* 4. 8. If there be any Vertue, &c. So that it seems one great End of the Saints Calling, that they show forth the Vertues of Christ. 'Tis not enough to show what was once in him, but what now is in him; One Thousand Seven Hundred Years have made no Change in Christ, nor in the least diminished his Excellency; he cannot, or at least will not, come down to die again; Death hath no more Dominion over him: Yet this I dare boldly affirm, there is the same Vertue in his Blood now, that there was when it ran fresh out of his bleeding Sides on the Cross, and that thou shalt find, whoever thou art that readest, if thou hast but a Heart to venture upon him. I may allude to what is said of *Abel*, *Heb.* 11. 4. *Being dead, he yet speaketh.* Wicked *Cain* hated Righteous *Abel*, and he hated him because he was Righteous, and therefore he resolved to Murder him, and so to rid the World of him, that so there might be no more mention of his Name nor Holiness; and yet, contrary to his Design, his Brother left a Voice behind him, when he lay in Silence Murder'd in the Grave. So when our Lord Christ was on Earth, he was such a burning and shining Light, that the dim Eyes of the Carnal World could not bear it; and, to be revenged on him, resolved, by the Devil's Assistance, to clear the World of him, and so by Wicked Hands they slew him. But behold, being dead, he yet speaketh; his Blood cries as loud as *Abel's*, but with a far sweeter Voice, *Heb.* 12. 24. *And to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the Blood of Sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.* *Abel's* Blood that cried indeed, but it was for Vengeance; but the  
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Blood of Christ cries for Pardon: *Abel's* Blood might damn *Cain*, but could not save him; but many, even of Christ's Crucifiers, were saved by the Blood they had shed: In a word, the Blood of Christ, so long ago shed, is the great Plea which he continually uses in his Intercession at God's Right Hand for us. This is the first thing. Roses fade and decay, and at last lose their Vertue, and become useles; so doth not Christ, who is the sweet Rose of *Sharon*.

2. Christ excels a Rose in this: Tho' Roses have a Vertue in them, yet it is suited to some particular Cases, and Distempers of the Body, and in some Cases they may rather do harm than good; but Christ hath a Vertue in him suited to all our Spiritual Maladies; he can cure one Distemper as well as another. You have heard of several Distempers he can cure, but you have not heard of all. To what hath been spoken, let me add, is our Distemper Spiritual Giddiness? He can cure that by that Vertue that is in him. Alas, till we are in Christ we all reel to and fro like a Drunken Man, saith the Prophet; *They are drunken, but not with Wine; they stagger, but not with strong Drink*, Isa. 29. 9. How many may we see in this giddy Age running from one Party to another, from one Opinion to another, like Waves driven up and down by every windy Doctrine: One while crying out this is the right Way, and these are the Men, and Wisdom will die with them; by and by, nay, - but they deceive the People. One while Christ is here, anon lo he is there. One while he is in the Desarts, and there is no finding him, or pretending to any comfortable Assurance that he is mine, or that I am his, anon he



he is in the Secret Chambers, and there is no need to go out of our Doors to meet him in his Publick Ordinances. Do but believe that you do believe, and that is thought enough by some. Now what should be the Cause of this Spiritual Giddiness? Why, to me it seems clear, 'tis for want of being established in Christ; 'tis a sad sign of a Christless Soul thus to be *ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the Truth*, 2 Tim. 3. 7. *Christ's Sheep know his Voice*, John 10. 4. And as a Woman that is Married will not easily mistake her Husband's Voice; so no more will one Married to Christ, take the Stammering Language of other Lovers for the Voice of her Well-beloved. The Believing Soul finds an establishing Vertue in Christ: Now the Soul sits down satisfied, and can find a Place to rest in the Ark, tho' no where else. Or is our Distemper Hardness of Heart? There is Vertue in Christ to mollifie that; one look of a dying Jesus will break the hardest Heart, *Zech. 12. 10. They shall look upon him, whom they have pierced, and mourn, &c.* In a Word, let thy Spiritual Distemper be what it will, this sweet Rose of *Sharon* hath a Vertue in him suited thereunto, and therein excels all Roses.

3. Christ excels a Rose in this, as Roses are useful for the Body only, and are suitable only to some Distempers; so neither do they always prove effectual to cure such Distempers; sometime Distempers are so prevalent, or of such a long continuance, that no help can be had; but now in Christ, this sweet Rose of *Sharon*, there is such a Vertue that never any missed of Cure to whom it was applied; it may be thy Sins have  
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been exceeding great, and the Cry of them hath reached even unto Heaven, and, as an overspreading Leprosie, have infected thy whole Man, that thou hast no sound Part in thee; it may be thou hast been a Prophane Swearer, a Filthy Drunkard, an Unclean Person, or a Great Backslider, and art now bewailing thy self thus, Sure there is no hopes that my stinking Wounds can ever be cured, that my filthy Soul should ever be washed and made clean, no healing Medicine for my deadly Disease: Well, suppose thy Case is lamentable, yet thy Wounds are not incurable; for if now God hath given thee a Heart to believe in Christ, and to apply this Rose of Sharon, thy Sickness shall not be unto Death, but for the Glory of God; for tho' thou mayest have been a mighty Sinner, yet Christ is *mighty to save*, Isa. 63. 1. *Tho' thy Sins have been as Scarlet, he can make them as white as Snow, and tho' red as Crimson, he can make them as Wooll* (z). And if any more need to be said, or can be said, as to this; you have it, Heb. 7. 25. *Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come to God through him.* The Pit thou'rt in cannot be too deep for these Cords of Love to draw thee out. You read of some that once were afar off, and as unlikely to find help as you can be, and yet *made nigh by the Blood of Christ*, Eph. 2. 13. Sinner, thou canst not have done so much to destroy thy self, but yet in him thy help is to be found, Hof. 13. 9 He thinks scorn that it should be once said, that the Devil, or thou thy self, should ever have made thee so Miserable, that it is not in his Power for to make thee Happy. Therefore let me add this

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(z) *Isa. i. 18.*

this for the Encouragement of such as labour under a Sense of Sin, and are heavy laden; tho' thy Sins are many and great, yet if thou dost not add this Sin to all the rest, of refusing to believe in him, thou canst not miscarry, or be finally lost, *Heb. 3. 18.* None shall be excluded but such as believe not, that imply'd in the Words. Or hath thy Distemper been of a long continuance? I mean, hast thou long been a Slave to Sin and Satan, and hast spent many Years in Vanity, till Grey Hairs are here and there, and the very Shadows of the Evening are stretched out upon thee? Yet there is help for thee in Christ. We read of one whom Christ cured, when on Earth, that had been Infirm *Twelve Years*, *Matth. 9. 20.* another *Eighteen Years*, and yet at last loosed from her Infirmity, *Luke 13. 12.* Nay, we read of one *Thirty and Eight Years*, and yet cured, *John 5. 6, 7, 8, 9.* And tho' thy Spiritual Infirmities have been of as long continuance as any of them, and longer, yet there is Virtue enough in Christ to cure thee. I shall close this Head with that sweet Text, *Heb. 4. 7. To Day, after so long a time, as it is said to Day, if ye will hear his Voice:* In which Place he is (as it were) answering some troubled Soul that might be reasoning with himself thus, Sure there is no hopes for me; I have not only been a great Sinner, but I have continued in it so long a Time, that sure my Day is over, and the Master of the House is risen and hath shut too the Door: God will never after his waiting so long a Time be gracious to such a provoking Wretch as I have been. To which the Holy Ghost doth, as it were, reply thus; Stay, poor Soul, I have better News to tell thee, than thou expectest or deservest to hear; and that is, *To Day, if you will*

*will bear his Voice.* But what might the poor Soul say after so long a Time? Yes, saith the Holy Ghost, after so long a Time. Sinner, do but hear, and obey his Voice Commanding thee to Believe, Repent, and to Turn from Sin unto God, and thou canst not miscarry, tho' it be after so long a Time. For tho' some Corporal Distempers may be so far gone, that no Physician or Physick can do any good, yet there is a Vertue in this sweet Rose of *Sharon* that never fails of Cure, even in the most Desperate Cafes, when rightly applied to the Soul.

Thus have I at length gone thro' the Metaphor, and have both shewn you how Christ may be compared to a Rose, and wherein he excels a Rose, even the Rose of *Sharon*. That which now remains, is, to consider what Truth is contained in the Metaphor. You may remember I told you *Sharon* was an excellent Soil, and this is clear from *Isa. 35. 2. The Excellency of Carmel and Skaron*; so that *Sharon's* Roses did excel all other Roses, so that the Words do naturally hold forth this Sweet and Comfortable Doctrine.

*Doct. Whatever there is which is desirable, or truly good, in, or appertaining to, the Creatures, is to be found in a far more Transcendent and Excellent manner in the Person of Jesus Christ.*

It was not without good cause, as you will hear, that *Paul* counted all things but Dung for the Excellency of Christ; all Created Excellencies are but as Twinkling Stars, which disappear before this rising Sun.

Or, *The Glory of Christ unvail'd.* 73

In speaking to this Doctrine I shall consider what things are Desirable or truly Excellent among the Sons of Men, and show you as I go how all are to be found in Christ, in a far more excellent Manner: For, sure I am, when all the Glory of this World will vanish and disappear, and end as a Dream, the Glory of this sweet Rose of *Sharon* will be fresh and flourishing. It would be time unprofitably spent to prove more generally that Christ must needs be the most Excellent, since it can be no otherwise. There must be more in the Cause than in the Effect; we have our All from him; 'tis of *his Fulness* have all we received, Joh. 1. 16. He it is *that filleth all in all*, Eph. 1. 23. And as we have our All from him, so he never bestows so much upon us, but he hath more remains in him than we have derived from him. The Creatures all shine with a borrowed Light; and the Glory of the Sun doth not so much outshine the Light of the least Twinkling Star, as the Glory of Christ doth outshine all the Glory of this World; in those the difference is between one Creature and another, but in the other the difference is between the Creator and the Creature, which is as great as between the Substance and the Shadow. There can be no Comparison between Infinite and Finite, between him that is the Mighty and Unchangeable God, and Frail, Mutable Man. Hence Christ being God, as well as Man, he thinks it beneath him that any should pretend to find that in the Creatures that should equal him; there being those Excellencies to be found in him, which are not to be found in the best of Creatures, whether Angels or Men; and from hence you may see that it must needs be a degrading of Christ to resemble him by Pictures,

as the Manner of some is: For tho' Christ is truly Man, and, as such, may be nearly resembled; yet he is as truly God, and so he cannot; and look, as no Wise Man will draw his Friend's Picture, and leave out his most Comely Parts, lest they should hereby render him Contemptible, rather than Honourable; so one would think that no Friend of the Bridegroom, who hath by an Eye of Faith seen this King in his Glory, should ever so undervalue Christ, as to resemble him by the Picture of a Man; since when they have drawn the most Beautiful Picture, the Art of Man can invent, his most Comely Parts will be wholly Concealed, even his Eternal Power and Godhead; and such Divines as love to please themselves with such Childish Toys, as to pretend to Picture Christ in all their Books, they do (in my Judgment) take the ready way to render such Books useless, while in the very beginning they cast such a Slur upon the Person they are to Treat of; and should the Reader judge of him in this Case no otherwise than according to the Resemblance the Writer hath made, should he judge of him in his Heart only, according to what he beholds with his Eyes, he can never judge him a meet Object for his Faith to rest upon: For, saith the Lord, *Cursed is the Man that trusteth in Man*, Jer. 17. 5. For, as had he been only Man, he could never have finished the Work of Redemption; so if he is represented to us by Pictures only, as a Creature, (and indeed he can be no otherwise,) we can never judge of him under that Representation to be a meet Object of our Faith: For until we come to conceive of him as the *Mighty God*, we can never savingly rely on him as *the Prince of Peace*, Isa. 7. 6. But I return from this little Digression, and taking

it for granted that all that profess themselves Christians, will own more generally that there is a Transcendent Excellency in Jesus Christ: Instead of Confirming this, I shall come more particularly to Enquire what those Things are which are so highly Esteemed among Men, or what is truly Excellent in the Creatures; and show you as I go along how there is that in Christ that doth far Excel all: For in all Things Christ must have the Preheminence; and when I have done this, I hope Christ will appear lovely in your Sight; and that you will no more have such low Thoughts of him as the World have: For tho' they will in Word own Christ to be most Excellent, yet for want of knowing wherein his Excellency doth consist, they put the greatest Slight upon him, and so Contradict in their Lives, what they Profess with their Mouths.

1. Honour is that which is highly Esteemed among Men, and looked upon as a thing very desirable; how greedily do Men pursue after it? And not only the Men of the World, who know no better Things, but even some of those whom we would hope are the Children of God, are Climbing too high that Way; who cannot be contented unless they sit in the uppermost Seats in the Council, or in the highest Seats in the Synagogues, hearing Men crying, *Rabbi, Rabbi.* How is each one Ambitious to have it said to them in the Presence of them that stand by, Friend, come up higher? Yea, how dearly will some purchase Honour? How will they spend their Money, yea, even hazard their Lives, and think themselves well Rewarded too; tho' they lose a Limb, if thereby they may but Advance themselves to

some higher Post of Honour? How desirable a thing is it to the World to hear Men Trum- peting forth the Encomiums of their Praise? And yet, after all, alas, what is it to have the Honour that this World can confer? 'Tis said, *Man being in Honour and abiding not, he is like the Beasts that Perish*, Psa. 49. 12. We read, *Acts 25. 23.* how *Agrippa* and *Bernice* came with *great Pomp*, 'tis in the *Greek*, with a great *Fansie*; and indeed, the Honour of this World is no more than a *Fansie*, or a *Dream*. Indeed, to be truly Honourable, to be Honourable in God's sight, to have such Honour as will abide, that is desirable; and as Honour is highly esteemed; so Christ is Honourable, he is Truly Honourable, he is Transcendently Honourable; he not only excels the World in Honour, as to the Truth of the Thing, theirs being but a *Shadow*, his a *real Thing*, but his Honour infinitely exceeds theirs in *Degree*: Supposing the Honour of the World to be as Desirable and Great as the Men of the World judge it to be. I cannot deny indeed but his Honour was once exceedingly Vailed with our *Flesh*, when *he emptied himself, and became of no Reputation*, *Phil. 2. 7.* during which time the blind World despised him, and esteemed him not: Yet even then he was Honourable, *John 8. 54.* *It is my Father which Honoureth me.* Men Despised him, but God Honoured him; and that is the true Honour which is from God. Men oft mistake, and judge such Base and Contemprible, as are truly Honourable, and such to be Honourable which are Contemprible; but the Judgment of God is always according to Truth. It was in this Case with the World, as usually in another Case, let a Man that is Honourable but appear in a mean Garb, and



and he will be by some but little respected, because the World judge according to outward Appearance; so because Christ, for a while, laid aside his Royal Robes, and Cloathed himself with our Flesh, therefore the World despised him. Well, tho' he appeared so mean in this respect, yet now he is Ascended on High, he is Cloathed with Glory, and Honour, and Majesty: He is now no more subject to the Scorn and Contempt of this World, as once he was: They can no more Blindfold him, Buffet him, nor Spit upon him (a). No more put a Reed in his Hand, nor a Crown of Thorns upon his Head (b); they shall no more wag the Head at him (c); while he is dying upon the Cross: He'll no more be dressed in their Fools (d) Coat, to make them Sport; no more carry a heavy Cross upon his mangled Shoulders (e), saith the Apostle *Heb. 2. 9. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the Angels, for the Suffering of Death, Crowned with Glory and Honour.* He that was so far above Angels, was made a little while lower than they, but now Crowned with Honour; he was not so much below them in his greatest Sufferings, but he is as far above them now; he was not seemingly so Contemptible then, but he is as Honourable now. He is now set down on the Right Hand of God, and hath *Authorities and Powers made subject to him*, 1 Pet. 3. 22. The highest Rank of them are placed on a Seat far below him; those Angels which once Comforted him in his Sufferings, are now Vailing of their Faces, while they behold the Brightness of his Glory (f). You have

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(a) *Matt. 26. 67.* (b) *Matt. 27. 29.* (c) *Matt. 27. 39.*  
 (d) *Matt. 27. 28.* (e) *John 19. 17.* (f) *1/a. 6. 2.*

a full Text setting forth the Glory and Honour of Christ, *Phil. 2. 9, 10. Wherefore God hath highly Exalted him, and given him a Name, which is above every Name, that at the Name of Jesus every Knee should bow, of Things in Heaven, and Things on Earth, and Things under the Earth.* You know bowing the Knee is a Token of Reverence and Subjection, and mind, this Name is above every Name; at his very Name every Knee must bow, of Things in Heaven, that is, Angels, of Things on Earth, that is, Men, of Things under the Earth, that is, Devils and Damned Souls. This is not to be understood of a Corporal Bowing, as some Superstitious Zealots pretend, who had rather bow the Head to him, than the Heart; (Angels and Devils having no such Knees to bow): But it Denotes his Supremacy, and the Awful Thoughts they all have of him, whom they bow to. Thus you see how highly Christ is Exalted; he that Lay in the Manger, now Rules in the Heavens. But I cannot pass this Head lightly, nor in speaking thus generally; I shall therefore more particularly consider what those things are which render Men Honourable in the VWorld's Esteem, and show you how they all meet as so many Badges of Honour in the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ; and in such a Manner as in no other beside himself: And I shall the rather do this because of the False Conceptions the VWorld have of Christ in this respect. For as the *Jews* would not receive Christ, because he did not appear in VWorldly Pomp and Grandeur; so the great reason so many make light of him now, is, because they do not think him to be so Honourable as indeed he is: And I cannot but hope, if I can but remove this Mistake, Christ will have more

to follow him than he hath had: The World are ready to give their Attendance on Great and Honourable Persons; Kings are wont to be attended with the Nobility and Gentry, wheresoever they go; who will leave their own Habitations to attend them, because Honourable? Yea, the greatest Lord will think it no Disgrace to be a Servant to such, and chiefly because of their Honour; and who knows but while I am particularly shewing how Christ exceeds all in Honour, there may be some *Moses*, who may prefer the Service, yea, the Sufferings of Christ, before a Court Life, and may Esteem the very *Reproaches of Christ greater Riches than the Treasures of Egypt?* *Heb. 11. 24, 25, 26.* Who knows, but while I am shewing the Honour of our Dear and Dying Redeemer, the Offence of the Cross may cease, and that it may be with some as it was with those that put Christ to open Shame; who when they saw such Infallible Signs of his being the Son of God, *Smote upon their Breasts (g)?* Had they known him to be the Lord of Glory, they would not have Crucified him *(h)*; and if I may but convince you he is certainly the Lord of Glory, you will not Crucifie him afresh, nor put him to open Shame, *Heb. 6. 6.* but if you do, you must own you are much worse than his Bloody Crucifiers.

First Badge of Honour, so esteemed among Men, is to be right Nobly Descended, and to stand related to some Great Family; and the greater the Family (is Good) the greater the Honour to be Related to it: 'Tis counted no small Honour to be related to a Knight, but more to be Related

lated to some Lord, but most of all to be Related to a King; and the nearer Related to such, the greater is the Honour. Now if this is to be Honourable, then Christ is Honourable, yea, he is most Honourable; and that both upon the account of the Greatness and Goodness of the Family he stands Related to, and also the nearness of the Relation he stands in to it. The Family he is Related to, is Great and Good, 'tis the only Family of Heaven and Earth; he stands Related to the Mighty and Omnipotent *Jehovah*, who is Possessor of Heaven and Earth (i): A very Ancient and Renowned Family, a Family which never in the Succession of Ages had any Blemish upon it, nor did ever any speak a Word against it, but such whose Tongues were no Slander. He stands related to that God that is Justice it self, Holiness it self, Wisdom it self, who was always a Liberal Benefactor, who hath maintained Thousands of Thousands daily at his Door; not one Person from the rising of the Sun to the setting of the same but what hath partook more or less of his Kindness: His Servants so many that no Man can Number them, *Rev. 7. 9.* Their Livery is very Rich, even of Cloath of Wrought Gold; they fare Sumptuously every Day; the Meanest of the Servants of this Family are Kings and Priests (k); no Family in the whole World to be compar'd unto this, and therefore none so Honourable as he is, on this Account; and more especially if we consider the nearness of the Relation he stands in to this Family: For the nearer Related we are to any Honourable Family, the more Honourable we are: 'Tis more Honourable for the Queen to

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(i) *Gen. 14. 19.* (k) *Rev. 1. 6:*

lye in the King's Bosom, than to be a Servant in his Family; why, my Brethren, Christ lyes in God's Bosom, *Jhn* 1. 18. Did Christ stand but barely Related to this Mighty God as a Servant, it would be no small Honour to him upon this Account. *David* was a Good Man and a King, yet see what he saith, *Psal.* 84. 10. *I had rather be a Doorkeeper in the House of my God, than to dwell in the Tents of Wickedness.* One would have thought to keep a Door had been too Mean an Employment for King *David*; and indeed, in any other Case it would. but not in this. It was his Honour to be employed in any Place for God, tho' it was to keep a Door. Hence you that are Saints know your Priviledge; so long as you are Servants to the Mighty God, you are highly Honoured. The World, in all Probability, not knowing the Family you belong to, nor the God whom you serve, may judge you Contemptible; and may be so far from giving you the Honour due on this Account, that they may look upon you *as the Filth and Off-scouring of all things*; but yet God looks upon you as Honourable, *1 Sam.* 2. 30. *Those that Honour me, I will Honour.* Our Lord Jesus Christ did stand thus Related to God the Father, and he was a faithful Servant in all he undertook, *Heb.* 3. 2. and on this Account he was Honourable; but yet Christ stands in a nearer Relation to God, *Luke* 1. 35. *That Holy thing that shall be Born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.* Yea, he is called God's First Begotten, and usually such are most Honoured, *Heb.* 1. 6. *Again, when he bringeth in the First Begotten into the World, he saith, and let all the Angels of God worship him,* even the highest Rank; and the reason is, because he is God's First Begotten. Nay,

yet further, he is called God's only Begotten Son, John 3. 16. *God so loved the World that he gave his only Begotten Son, &c.* But because an own Son, and an only Son, may prove Undutiful, and so stain his Honour; saith God, *Matt. 3. 17. This is my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased ;* hence we are said to be *Translated into the Kingdom of his Dear Son, Col. 1. 13.* or into the Kingdom of the Son of his Dear Love, as it may be read ; and if any thing more can be added, you have it in *Heb. 1. 3. Who being the Brightness of his Glory, and the Express Image of his Presence, &c.* Once more, *Phil. 2. 7. Who being in the Form of God, thought it not Robbery to be Equal with God.* Now put these together, he is not only God's Servant, his Faithful Servant, but also his Son, his Dear Son, his Own Son, his First Begotten Son, his Only Son, and now judge if he is not Honourable.

And as he stands thus nearly Related to God as his only Begotten Son, so he stands in a nearer Relation to God than Saints or Angels, and so consequently is more Honourable than either. The Saints they are not so nearly Related ; they do indeed belong to this Royal Family, *Eph. 2. 19.* saith the Apostle, *Ye are of the Household of God,* yea, they are called Sons, *1 John 3. 1,* but not as Christ is ; our Relation to God is by Christ, who is *the First born among many Brethren, Rom. 8. 29.* He is God's Natural Son by Eternal Generation, we only adopted by Grace and Regeneration. Between which there is a wide Difference, especially in Point of Honour. Similitude, suppose some Nobleman takes a Beggar in Rags, nay, suppose him to have been a Thief, and every ways as bad as can be, and he adopts this Man, and takes him as his Son, and makes him Heir of  
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all he hath : Now tho' by Vertue hereof he may come to possess the Inheritance, as if he had been the natural Son, (the Donor having Power to do what he will with his own) yet no Wise Man will think him worthy of as much Honour, as if he had been a Natural and Dutiful Son ; and yet much thus the Case stands ; when God comes to adopt us, and take us into his Family, he finds us Poor and Miserable, Undeserving, Ill-deserving Creatures, defiled with Sin, Rebels against himself, belonging to the Family of Hell, and very near akin to the Devil. Now tho' by Vertue of this his Grace towards us, we become Joint-Heirs with him that is the natural Son, *Rom. 8. 17.* yet none can suppose us to be equally Honourable with him ; Christ must in all things have the Preheminence, *Col. 1. 18.*

And as none of the Saints do stand thus nearly Related to God, so neither do the good Angels themselves ; they are also called Sons (1), but not as Christ is : They are Sons only by Creation, but he is the natural Son, he stood Related to this Family long before any of them had a Being ; and tho' they are of the same Family, and are with him beholding and admiring his Glory, yet they are far beneath him, as you may see, *Eph. 1. 20, 21.* *And set him at his own Right Hand in Heavenly Places, far above all Principalities, and Power, and Might, and Dominion, and every Name that is named, not only in this World, but also in that which is to come ; and hath put all things under his Feet, &c.* In which full Text no doubt but Angels are Comprehended ; and he is said not only to be above them, but far above them ; see  
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(1) *Job 38. 7.*

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one Text more, *Heb. 1. 5. For unto which of the Angels said he at any time, thou art my Son? &c.* Those Glorious Cherubims must veil their Faces while they are near him. Thus I have shewn you how Christ stands nearer related to God than Saints or Angels, and so is more honourable than either. Christ doth as much excel others on this Account in Honour, as *Sharon's* Rose did excel other Roses; in a word, whatever Honour is due to Saints or Angels, they derive all from him: The Angels, in that they are made by him, and are with him, and established by him; for considering them in their own mutable State, so they are charged with Folly (*m*). The Saints, in that they are so nearly Related to him; and was it not for this the Saints would have been as Contemptible as now they are Honourable, *1 Pet. 2. 7. To you therefore which believe, he is an Honour.* So 'tis in the Original.

Second Badge of Honour, so esteemed among Men, is to have some Title or Titles conferr'd upon them: When a King hath a Son Born, he hath immediately some Title given him; and O what Honour 'tis counted to be called Prince, or Duke, or Earl, or Lord of such a Place; and the higher the Titles are, the more Honourable on this Account. How ready are the Common Sort of People almost to Adore such, as they did Proud *Herod*, when they shouted and said, *It was the Voice of a God, and not of a Man*; but for their bold Presumption to Equal him with God, the Angel of the Lord smote him; and when they saw him die such a Miserable and Unusual Death, they

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(*m*) *Job 4. 18.*



they knew him to be but a Man, *Acts* 12. You read how Good Men have even Trembled to have such Titles given them, as we ought to give to Christ: When the Man of *Lystra* had said of *Paul* and *Barnabus*, that *the Gods were come down in the likeness of Men, they Rent their Cloaths, crying out, Sirs, Why do you these things? We are also Men of like Passions with you,* *Acts* 14. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15. Nor need this seem strange, for if we consult the Scripture, we shall find such Titles given to Christ, as neither the highest Rank of Men nor Angels can, without the highest Presumption, pretend unto; and therefore he must needs be the most Honourable in this respect, *Phil.* 2. 9. *Wherefore God hath highly Exalted him, and given him a Name above every Name.* None of the Sons of Men have such Titles, and so many Titles, as Christ hath; see a full Text to this, *Rev.* 19. 16. *And he hath on his Vesture, and on his Thigh, a Name written, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords:* Some are called Lords, others Kings; but whoever among Men could lay just Claim to such a Title as King of Kings? The Pope indeed is by some styl'd *Rex Regum*. but he's but a Usurper: But Christ can lay a just Claim to a Title above Kings, for he is *the Prince of the Kings of the Earth,* *Rev.* 1. 5. Hence *John*, speaking of the Heavenly *Jerusalem,* *Rev.* 21. 24. he there tells us that *the Kings of the Earth do bring their Glory and Honour into it:* The meaning, I humbly conceive, is, that when Kings get to Heaven, they shall see all their Glory and Honour even swallowed up in the Glory and Honour of Christ; you have a Parallel Text, *Isa.* 52. 15. *Kings shall shut their Mouths at him, for that which had not been told them they shall see, and that which they had not heard*

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*heard they shall consider :* They shall shut their Mouths at him, *i. e.* shall be silent, as ashamed to mention their own Glory and Honour in his Presence ; and 'tis added, when that which had not been told them they shall see ; &c. implying, that tho' so long as they were ignorant of Christ, and his Honour, they might boast of their own ; yet when once they come to see, and consider his Honour, his Glory, and his Titles, they should be silent, and boast no more : Look as it was in *Joseph's* Dream, where you read, how all the Sheaves stood up, and did Obeisance to his Sheaf (n) ; so, when all the Saints shall meet together in Heaven, they must all throw down their Crowns before him, forasmuch as he hath a higher Title than they ever had. Alas, Sirs, it will be but a little while before all these Earthly Titles (how great soever) will vanish as Smoak ; but it will be the Work of Saints to all Eternity to Sing, *Worthy is the Lamb that was Slain to receive Power, and Riches, and Wisdom, and Strength, and Honour, and Glory, and Blessing,* Rev. 5. 12. Thus you see how Christ excels the Sons of Men in Honourable Titles. I must add, he also excels the Angels in this respect, *Heb. 1. 4. Being made so much better than the Angels, as he hath by Inheritance obtained a more Excellent Name than they :* Mind, by Inheritance ; you know among Men some have their Titles by Birthright, others have Titles Conferr'd upon them ; but the former are most Honourable : So Christ having a more Excellent Name than they, and having it by Inheritance too, he must needs be more Honourable than they. Christ is stiled *the Mighty God* in *Isa. 9. 6.* which is a little too high for the highest of them to pretend

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(n) *Gen. 37. 7.*

tend to. The Angels dare not pretend to that Honour that is due to him on this Account. When *John* would have worshipped the Angel, either through a Mistake, supposing him to have been the Angel of the Covenant, or else through Humane Infirmitie, but saith the Angel, *See thou do it not, I am thy Fellow-servant, Worship God* (o). As if he had said, Worship is due only to him that is God, but I dare not presume to lay claim to such a Title, therefore see thou do it not : But I proceed to the next thing.

Third Badge of Honour so esteemed among Men, is to be Rich, to have great Possessions, or to be Heir to some great Inheritance; and the greater the Possession, the greater the Honour of the Possessor; a Man that is Rich shall be often Honoured and Respected, tho' of a Mean, yea, Base Descent, when another that belongs to a good Family shall be despised for want thereof. O the Bowing and Cringing to such, either for Fear or Love. So that we find to be true by Experience, *Prov. 14. 20. The Poor is hated of his own Neighbour, but the Rich have many Friends* : They which want Friends least, usually have most. Now if Riches and large Possessions will render the Owners thereof Honourable, then Christ is Transcendently Honourable; for herein he exceeds the richest Monarch on Earth. Indeed when he was here on Earth he emptied himself, and became Poor, that we through his Poverty might be made Rich, *2 Cor. 8. 9.* and how did he complain? *Matth. 8. 20. The Foxes have Holes, and the Birds of the Air have Nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his Head.* O Poor and  
 Low

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(o) *Rev. 22. 8, 9.*

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Low Condition: How meanly did he fare? We read of some that Ministred to him of their Substance. Well, tho' it was thus with him then, 'tis otherwise with him now; though this Glorious King once put himself into as mean a Condition, almost as the meanest of his Subjects, yet now he hath all come into his Hand again, *Heb. 1. 2. Whom he hath appointed Heirs of all things:* 'Tis he that is Possessor of Heaven and Earth. His Possessions on Earth are very great; *The Earth is the Lord's, and the Fulness thereof,* *Psal. 24. 1.* As there is nothing but what was at first made by him, so the Right of all still belongs to him: He is the great Landlord of this Lower World; and herein he exceeds the richest Man on Earth. One Man may say this is mine, another this is mine, thus far go my Bounds, and then begin the Bounds of such a Man; but who can lay claim to all? But Christ hath a Possession of a vast extent, and and beyond his there is nothing but *Terra Incognita*, an unknown Land. If thou art one in Christ, thou canst never go off thy Father's Land, for Christ is Absolute Lord of all; when Men have bought Lands, and have sealed the Writings, and paid the Money, yet the Right of that Inheritance belongs to Christ; we are all of us but Tenants at Will to this great Lord, and he may turn us out when he pleases, and that without the least Warning, and do us no wrong. He it is that meeteth out the Bounds of our Habitation (p), and gives, or rather lends, to one so much, and to another so much; and to another, more dear it may be to him than either, not so much as to set his Foot on, *Deut. 2. 5.* Thus you may see how

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(p) *Acts 17. 26.*

how Christ exceeds all in Honour in this respect; and more especially if to what hath been spoken we do also consider what he possesses now in Heaven, he will appear Honourable indeed; the Heavenly Inheritance is the best Inheritance; and he that hath never so much here below, if he hath not Treasure in Heaven, will be found in the End to be Poor and Miserable; he only is truly Rich who hath his Treasure laid up where *no Moth corrupteth, nor Thief breaketh through to steal*: All the Riches of this World are but Poverty, and the Honour thereof but Ignominy, if compared to the Riches and Honour above. The poorest Saint above possesses more than the richest Sinner on Earth; What then must Christ possess who is Lord of the Upper as well as of the Lower World? We read of a Glorious City described in the 21st Chapter of the *Revelations*, and Christ is Possessor of that! We read of a Kingdom, and Crown of an exceeding weight of Glory, and Christ is Lord of all those: But I can speak but little of these things. I grant the Saints above are Partakers of a Glorious Inheritance, they have received a Kingdom that cannot be moved, and a Crown that fadeth not away (q), but they do not possess these as Christ doth; for all that they possess is by free Donation, but Christ is the Natural Heir: They had never possessed any thing if it had not been Purchas'd by him; he had possessed all things if they had never been. He is found worthy to receive Riches (r). It will be the Work of the Saints for ever, in the midst of their greatest Enjoyments, to Praise him for what they do enjoy: So that, if Riches and large Possessions

(q) 1 Pet. 5. 4.

(r) Rev. 5. 12.

Possessions will render any Honourable, then Christ much excels all on this account, as far as *Sharon's Rose* did excel other Roses: As he is most Nobly Descended, he being from above, we from beneath; so he enjoys a far more Noble Possession than any Man in the World; and indeed than this World can produce.

A Fourth Badge of Honour so esteemed among Men, is to have a Governing Power committed to them; and this is distinct from the former. A Man may be Rich and no Governour, but when both those meet together, they make a Man highly Esteemed, and greatly Honoured, by the World. We see daily how Ambitious Rich Men are of Governing, as that which is an Addition to their Honour; and indeed we are bound to honour such as Rule and are in Authority; and especially such as Rule well; and if so, then Christ is Honourable indeed; for 'tis said, *Isa. 9. 6. And the Government shall be upon his Shoulders*, which Words are clearly spoken of Christ; and observe, 'tis not said he shall be a Governor, but the very Government it self shall be upon his Shoulders: And he had need have broad Shoulders to bare it. None can compare with Christ in this respect, either as to the Duration and Continuance of his Kingdom, or with respect to the Extent of it, it being both Endless and Boundless: If we compare others with him as to the Duration of their Government, alas, what are they to him? The Greatest and Best of Kings must die, and leave their Crowns and Scepters to others; they are sometimes tumbled off their Thrones by Violence, either by Open War, or by Secret Conspiring: But there is no Dethroning of Christ this Way. You read in the Second *Psalme* how the Heathen raged, how  
Kings

Kings and Rulers plotted against the Lord's Anointed, and yet they did but *imagine a vain thing*; his Bands were too strong for them to break, notwithstanding they were in such a Rage, saith God the Father, Verse 6. *Yet have I set my King upon my Holy Hill of Sion*; as if he had said, There he sits, and there he shall sit, in spite of your Combined Power and Policy. But if Kings are not thrust off their Thrones by wicked and violent Hands, yet they must die; the Thread of Life will soon wear out if not cut; they must die as well as their meanest Subject. They who have lived in the most Stately Palace, must one Day leave their Guards, and lye down in the dark Chamber of the Grave; and Death will have Dominion over them that had the largest Dominion over others. No sooner scarce is the Governing Power laid upon some Shoulders, but it drops off again, and they change their Royal Robes for a Winding-sheet; and oft they that never could be destroyed by all the Power and Policy of Men, do suddenly crumble into the Dust upon the least touch of the Mighty Hand of God. A sad Instance we have in King *William* of Blessed Memory; How did Death Conquer him who had been such a Conqueror? And he that once made the Earth to tremble, now lyes Silent in Darkness. How doth God often deal with Kings as he did with him you read of? *Dan. 5. 1, 2, &c.* in the midst of his Mirth sends him an unwelcome Messenger to tell him his Kingdom is divided, and given to others, Verse 28. Thus this King of Kings tumbles others from their Thrones in a Moment, changes their Countenance, and sendeth them away: But now Christ, he lives, Death hath no more Dominion over him; *Rev. 1. 18: I am*

*he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am  
 alive for evermore, Amen, and have the Keys of  
 Hell and Death; and as he lives always, so he  
 governs always; I shall give you some clear  
 Texts to prove this comfortable Point, Dan. 7.  
 13, 14. And there was given to him Dominion,  
 and Glory, and a Kingdom, &c. and then adds,  
 His Dominion is an Everlasting Dominion which  
 shall not pass away, and his Kingdom that which  
 shall not be destroyed. And this is more than  
 ever was said to any meer Man in this World;  
 a Parallel Text you have, Dan. 2. 44. And in the  
 Days of those Kings shall the God of Heaven set  
 up a Kingdom which shall never be destroyed, and  
 the Kingdom shall not be left to other People, but it  
 shall break in pieces and consume all those Kingdoms;  
 and it shall stand for ever. Those Scriptures as  
 they are full to my Purpose, so they are applica-  
 ble to none but unto Christ: But lest some should  
 question this, they being in a dark Prophecie, I shall  
 confirm this from the New Testament, Luke 1.  
 31, 32, 33. And behold thou shalt Conceive in  
 thy Womb, and bring forth a Son, and shall call  
 his Name Jesus, and, 33, he shall Reign over  
 the House of Jacob for ever, and of his King-  
 dom there shall be no end. Once more, Heb. 1. 8.  
 But unto the Son he saith, Thy Throne, O God,  
 is for ever, and ever, &c. Or if we consider  
 the extent of his Government, in this also he ex-  
 cels all others. Among Men one hath a Govern-  
 ing Power extends so far, another so far; one  
 over a Nation, another over a Town only; but  
 'tis not so as to Christ, Dan. 9. 27. All Dominions  
 shall serve and obey him. So Zech. 9. 10. And his  
 Dominion shall be from Sea even to Sea, and from  
 the River even unto the Ends of the Earth. Once  
 more,*



more, *Matth.* 28. 18. *All Power is given to me in Heaven and in Earth.* Christ then you see is the Sole Monarch of the World, he is a Universal Governour both in Church and State, and so exceeds all in this respect. (1.) Over his Church; and here he hath a larger Dominion than any Creature on Earth, the Pope himself not excepted: 'Tis said, *Eph.* 1. 22. *And hath put all things under his Feet, and gave him to be the Head over all things to the Church.* He is the only Lawgiver. Here Men have nothing to do to add to his Laws, nor hath he given a Dispensing Power to any: They are in danger of being curst that dare presume to add to, or take from, the Rule he hath given to direct us. Christ hath indeed appointed Officers to Rule and Govern in his Church, but we are but Deputies under him; we are but Under-rowers, he is the Chief Governour: We are to feed his Flock, but he is the *Chief Shepherd*, *1 Pet.* 5. 4. We are but Stewards of the Mysteries of the Kingdom, he is the Master of the Family; we are at best but Ambassadors (s), and he our King to Command us, and to Remove us at his Pleasure: These Stars are in his Right Hand, and he will e'er long call us to Account (t) how we have demeaned our selves in the Church of God, what Care we have taken to feed his Lambs and Sheep in those Particular Churches, over which the Holy Ghost hath made us Overseers. As Christ is the Purchaser of his Church, so he will be the Governour in the midst of us; and 'tis but Reason the Spouse should be in Subjection to her Bridegroom. We have Christ set forth as walking in the midst of the Seven Golden Candlesticks (v); the Candlesticks were those Seven Churches;

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Churches;

(s) 2 Cor. 5. 20.

(t) *Heb.* 13. 17.

(v) *Rev.* 2. 1.

Churches; his walking in the midst of them denotes his exact Observation how things are managed there: And 'tis well for us that he is thus concerned in his Church; for was the Management of those Matters left only unto Men, the Bush that is on Fire would be in danger of being consumed; did he not guide the Helm while we are tugging at the Oars, we should be in continual danger of splitting upon the Rock on the one Hand, or sinking in the Gulf on the other Hand: 'Tis comfortable having a Skilful Pilot in a Tempestuous Sea. (2.) He is a Universal Governour in Civil Affairs, *Prov. 8. 15, 16. By me Kings Reign, and Prince Decree Justice:* And if they make any unrighteous Decrees, if they do not Rule for him, if they do not Execute their Power for the Terror of Evil Doers, and for the Encouragement of such as do well, he will bind such Kings with Chains, and Nobles with Fetters: He will make them feel the weight of his Iron Rod, *Pf. 2. 9, 10.* and will make them Cry *to Rocks to fall on us, and to Mountains to cover us,* as being unable to stand when once the great Day of his Wrath is come, *Rev, 6. 15, 16.* Thus you see how he excels all in Governing, and consequently in Honour. And to all I have spoken I must add one thing more under this Particular; as that which tends more to his Honour than any thing I have yet spoken, and 'tis this, Christ hath always Ruled well in the forementioned Respects; as his Throne endureth for ever, so his *Sceptre is a Righteous Sceptre,* *Heb. 1. 8.* It is spoken Prophetically of Christ, *Isa. 32. 1. Behold, a King shall Reign in Righteousness.* Had his Kingdom been Endless, and the Extent of his Government boundless, yet if he had not Ruled in Righteousness,

ness, he would have been worthy of the less Honour; as the Apostle saith, speaking of Church Officers, *1 Tim. 5. 17. Let the Elders which Rule well be counted worthy of double Honour: Why, Christ he hath Ruled well, and so as never Man Ruled: he never took one wrong Step in all his Proceedings.* 'Tis true, indeed, this great Governour of his Church hath sometime led his Flock thro' a Wilderness, he hath suffered the Bush to be on Fire, hath suffered his Church for a while to be as the Ground for the Enemies to go over, and hath suffered them to Plough deep and long Furrows upon the Backs of the Righteous; he hath thus given the Dearly Beloved of his Soul into the Hands of them that hated them; he hath suffered his Dear People to *Wander in Desarts and Mountains, being Destitute, Afflicted, Tormented,* and yet hath done them Good by all; while the more they have been Afflicted, the more they have Grown and Encreased, *Ex. 1. 12.* So as to Commonwealths also, he hath suffered VVars, he hath sent the Famine and Pestilence, which have swept away Thousands, and Ten Thousands, yet never herein swerved from the Rule of Justice, but always Punished them less than their Iniquities deserved: Nor was he any more to be blamed herein than a Prince for Punishing his Rebellious Subjects, since he never brought any Judgments upon a Nation or People, but for Sin. The Old World were not destroyed till all Flesh had corrupted themselves, nor *Sodom,* till the Cry of their Sins had reached unto Heaven. Thus you see Christ is a Universal and a Good Governour, and doth as far Excel all in Honour on this Account, as *Sharon's* Rose did Excel other Roses; or, as the Lilly in the Fat Val-

ley doth that which grows upon the Parched and Scorched Mountains or Hills.

A Fifth Badge of Honour, so esteemed among Men, is, to have a great Attendance of Servants and others to Accompany them, or to Wait upon them. We see when Men would look Great, they usually do appear with a great Retinue, and the more numerous their Servants are, and the higher Degree they are of, the more Honour to them on whom they do attend. And if this is to be Honourable, then Christ is more Honourable than any of the Sons of Men; indeed, when he appeared in the Flesh it was in a Mean Condition, being chiefly attended with a few Poor Fishermen, and some others of low Degree; but few of the Rulers believed in him, or attended on him: But if we consider him as he is now in Glory, or, as he will come at the Great Day to Judgment, so he is, and will be, more Gloriously attended than ever any of the Kings or Mighty Men of the Earth ever were; he far Excels all others, both as to the Number and as to the Nature of his Attendance; what a great Number do you read of? *Rev. 5. 9. A great Multitude that no Man could Number?* Never was Man Attended with such a Number; and yet these all Wait on him as Servants at his Command. Add to these those many Thousands of swift-winged Cherubins which are always Ministering about his Throne, which are all absolutely at his Disposal; he saith to One, go, and he goeth; and to Another, come, and he cometh; and they do so Excel in Strength, that they never fail to accomplish the Thing whereunto he sends them. Were we but to see that vast Number that minister about him, we should

should say, he is Honourable indeed upon that Account: And as he excels all others in Number; so also in the Nature of his Attendance; Men may be attended with Men, but Christ is attended by Angels: And as Man is attended only by Men, so they are Sinful Men, and oftentimes the worst of that Sort, which rather are a Disgrace than Honour to them on whom they attend; but Christ hath no worse about him than Saints, and those of a far more refined Nature than any here below; they are all in White Robes, and without Fault before his Throne, having no Spot, or Wrinkle, or any such Thing; or if we look to him as coming to Judge the World, O the Glorious Retinue Christ will then appear with! He will then have a great Company, and a good Company, when every Eye shall see him, and the Trumpet shall Sound before him; when all the Saints that have been, are, or shall be, shall meet together; there will be no Filthy Drunkards, no Swearers, no Damners among them; none but the Pure in Heart, who have washed their Robes, and have made them White in the Blood of the Lamb. Sinners in their Filthy Garments must not presume to stand before him; he will then sever between the Righteous and the Wicked. The Meanest of his Attendance will be Kings, all wearing Crowns, not of Gold, but of an exceeding Weight of Glory: Nor must they wear them on their Heads, but throw them down at his Feet, in Token of their Subjection to him, *Rev. 4. 10, 11.* They all know their distance from him, all fix their Admiring Eyes upon him, they all join together in the loudest Acclamations to extol him.

A Sixth Badge of Honour, esteemed so among Men, is to attempt and effect some Noble Enterprize ; indeed barely to attempt some Great Work, and not be able to effect it, gets one no Honour ; but when Men do accomplish their Design in some Great and Good Work, it renders them Honourable : Many, by accomplishing some Great Undertaking, or by their Valour in Fighting with, and Conquering some Subtil and Potent Enemy, have hereby purchased to themselves some great degree of Honour ; and if so, then Christ is Honourable, as none beside him are, for he hath done such Works, and Conquered such Enemies as never any did, or dare pretend to ; as to his Works, he hath formed the Stately and Beautiful Fabrick of this World, and that without any help from any Creature ; he did but Command it, and it immediately appeared in its Beautiful Form, *John 1. 3. All Things were made by him, and without him was not any Thing made that was made ;* that him is Christ, the Essential Word, mentioned in the first Verse ; it is he that stretch- ed out the vast Expansion of the Heavens, and that hath appointed the Sun, Moon and Stars in that Order in which they move ; it's he that hath set Bounds to the raging Waves of the Sea, *and saith, Hitherto shall ye come, and no further,* and they Obey his Sovereign Command ; it's he that hath laid the Foundation of the Earth, and hang- eth that Ponderous Bulk upon nothing ; and who- ever did as he hath done ? Much hath been done by Men by way of Imitation, but nothing of Crea- tion. All the Cunning Artificers in the World can- not make one Pile of Grass, nor a Hair, *Matt. 5. 36. Ex nihilo nihil fit,* is a Maxim to be observed a-  
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mong the Creatures; they may Change Matter into this and the other Form, but must have some Pre-existing Matter to Work upon, or they can do nothing; but Christ made all things out of nothing.

And as his Works are Glorious, so his Victories are most Renowned; I shall only mention one, for which he is worthy of the highest Honour, and that is, the Glorious Victory he got over that Subtil and Potent Prince of the Power of the Air, I mean the Devil, when he delivered us who were taken Prisoners by him, and were led Captive by him at his Will; Christ beheld us in this Miserable, Helpless State and Condition, and in Love to us he resolved to Fight a Duel, even with the Prince of Darkness, and God of this World; yea, to engage alone with all the Black Legions of that Infernal Lake, to the End that he might *divide the Spoil with the Strong (u)* and take the Prey from the Mighty (w); that he might bind the Strong Man, and then spoil his Goods. But O how sharp was the Conflict between the Seed of the Women, and this Old Serpent! Here was bruising and breaking each other. O! How the Captain of our Salvation Fought to bring us off? No sooner was Christ come into the World, but this Serpent began to spit his Poyson: Satan stirred up all his Strength to oppose him, set all his Instruments on Work, mustered up all his Forces, employed all the Wit in his Seven Heads, that if possible he might have destroyed the Blessed Jesus in his Infancy; and as he began, so he continued: He put it into the Heart of *Judas* to Betray him, when all other Attempts

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(u) *Isa.* 53. 12. (w) *Isa.* 49. 24.

Attempts proved ineffectual. It was he that was the chief Counsellor to the *Jews*, to let them know they had a Law by which he ought to die; not doubting but if he could perswade them to put him to Death as a Malefactor, and that by such a Witness too, it would turn to a better Account in the End, than if Assaulted by open Violence, not fearing that any would believe in such a One. At length he accomplishes his Hellish Design, sees him fast Nailed to the Cross, and Numbred with Transgressors; and now the Devil begins to laugh, and to hug himself, and Rewards *Judas* for the good Service he had done him: Now, thinks he, the Work is done, now the Day's my own; now I shall enjoy my Goods in Peace, and still lead Captive at my VVill; now I shall be no more Tormented with his Preaching, nor with the Miracles he hath Wrought; now I have Conquered him, and am even with him for all the Mischief he hath done me. But behold how this Deceiver is Deceived! How this Subtil Serpent is Outwitted, while he eagerly catches hold at the Bait of Christ's Flesh, he is held by the Hook of the Divine Nature; he thought to have destroyed One, as he had done All, and for that One lost Many; see how the Captain of our Salvation Beats him with his own Weapons. And when Satan thought that hereby he had so Established his Kingdom, that it should never have been moved, behold it falls like Lightning from Heaven (x); and by Death Christ *destroys him that had the Power of Death*, Heb. 2. 14. Satan was resolved to have Christ's Blood, Christ suffers him so to do, and by that Blood he procures

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(x) *Luke 10. 18.*



cures a Ransom for many, whom he had taken Captive: He suffers himself to be brought into the lowest Condition, gives the Devil all the Advantage that might be, and even then gets a Compleat Victory over him, and breaks his Head while he was nibbling at his Heel, *Coll. 2. 15.* and having spoiled Principalities and Powers, he made a shew of them openly, Triumphant over them in it, that is, on the Cross; he there Rides as in a Chariot of Triumph, shewing to the World the Glorious Victory he had obtained; and not only Satan, but also his Instruments, were Ashamed and Confounded, who had been the Devil's chief Actors in that Bloody Tragedy; Poor *Judas* was so Wounded he went and hang'd himself: The rest feared greatly, saying, *Truly this Man was the Son of God*, *Matt. 27. 54.* Another Evangelist saith, They smote upon their Breasts, as if they had said, Lord, what is this that we have done! What will become of us one Day for killing the Lord of Glory, and for putting him to such open Shame? And so wished they had never meddled with him. It was in this Case much as it was between *Sampson* and the *Philistines*; *Sampson* had done them no little harm in his Life; he had burnt their Corn, and slew many of them: But they resolve to be even with him, and so persuaded his Bosom Friend to betray him, to shew where his great Strength lay, and having put out his Eyes, they made him grieve in the Prison; but ~~not~~ being not content with that, they resolve to satisfy their Revenge, and to expose him to more open Shame; and to that End, when the Lords of the *Philistines* were met together, they send for Poor Blind *Sampson* to make them Sport; and brave Sport he made, for in the midst of their Mirth he

he throws down the House upon them, and so did them more hurt at his Death than he had done in his Life, *Judges 16*. Thus Christ, he did the Devil's Interest no little harm by his Heavenly Doctrine, by his Holy Life, and by the Miracles he wrought ; he had no little vexed Satan in Dispossessing him so often, and by taking so many Prisoners from him ; for which the Devil owed him an Old Grudge, and resolved to be Revenged upon him, or he would want of his VWill ; and as they first put out *Sampson's* Eyes, and made him ~~Grise~~<sup>Blind</sup>, so the Devil first begins to play a small Game ; he is led into a VWilderness, and there he tempts him to Unbelief ; after that would not do, he sets him on a Pinnacle of the Temple, and there tempts him to VVorship him ; but not content with these, he resolves to have his Blood ; and as they made use of *Dalilah*, so he of *Judas*. But behold, when the Day comes that they were to have some Sport, Christ takes hold of the very Pillars which supported the Devil's Kingdom, and down it comes ; and so did him more harm at his Death than in his Life.

A Seventh Badge of Honour, so esteemed among Men, is to be a great Sufferer in and for a Good Cause : And I add, for a Good Cause ; to suffer as an Evil Doer, tho' the Sufferings were never so great, was never thought an Honour, but a Shame ; but to suffer much, and to suffer in a Good Cause, is Honourable indeed. How are the very Names of the Martyrs that suffered so much for the Truth Renowned even to this Day ? But now if this will render any Honourable, then Christ is Honourable above all ; none ever suffered like him. The Martyrs did but sip of that bitter Cup which he drank  
the

the very Dregs of. O! How great were the Sufferings of his Body, had that been all? How was he *Despised, and Rejected of Men, a Man of Sorrows, and Acquainted with Grief?* How was he Buffeted, Blindfolded and Spit upon? How many Stripes did he receive from those Merciless Soldiers, and at last made to carry a heavy Cross upon his mangled Shoulders, till the Enemies fearing it should be his Death, and fearing lest they should miss of their Design in putting him to a more Shameful Death, they compel *Simon* to bear his Cross part of the Way; and O the Torment he endured when upon the Cross! How many Hours was he nailed to the Tree? Let us take a more exact view of the Blessed Jesus hanging in this Dying Condition. O! See his Head which was as the most Fine Gold, now wearing a Crown of Thorns, and the Blood gushing out; his Looks, which were as Ravens, now wet with the Drops of the Night; his Eyes, which had been as Doves, and which had been so often lift up to God in Prayer for thee and me, now set, and the Eyestrings breaking; his Cheeks, which were as a Bed of Spices, as sweet Flowers, now growing Pale and Van; his Hands, which were as Gold Rings, set with the Beryl, now bored thro' and nailed unto the Cross; his Legs, which were as Pillars of Marble, set upon Sockets of Fine Gold, now having all the Bones, as it were, out of joint; his Countenance, which was as *Lebanon*, excellent as Cedars, now more marred than any of the Sons of Men; his Mouth, which was most Sweet, and which had spoke as never Man spoke (his Enemies being Judges) is now speechless, and only utters some dying Sobs and Groans. But O the Glorious Ignominy! O the Beautiful

ful Deformity, the lovely Paleness, Leanness, Wanness, forasmuch as for our sake he endured all! He was deeply Wounded indeed, but it was for our Transgressions; he was sorely Bruised, but it was for our Iniquities, he was severely Chastised, but it was for our Peace, *Isa. 53. 4, 5.* But you have not heard of all his Sufferings yet; had this been all, 'tis possible some of the Martyrs might equal him, who were Burnt at Stakes, Rosted on Spits, Boiled in Cauldrons, Broiled on Gridirons, as some were. Let us therefore cast an Eye upon his Soul Sufferings, the Martyrs in the Flames were filled with Joy by the sensible Presence of God, but Christ cried out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* May we judge of his Sufferings by the Sins he was to satisfy for, we must needs suppose them to be exceeding great, for all the Sins of all the Elect met at once on him, *Isa. 53. 6. And the Lord hath laid on him the Iniquity of us all;* O heavy Burden! Tho' his Corporal Sufferings were exceeding great, yet but light Afflictions, if compared to his Soul Sufferings, *Matt. 26. 37. He began to be Sorrowful;* 'tis said he was a Man of Sorrows, as it were made up of Sorrows, and yet now he began to be Sorrowful; to let us know, that he in all his Sorrows never met with such Sorrows before. Verse 38. *My Soul is exceeding Sorrowful, even unto Death.* How did this cause him to sweat Clods of Blood in the Garden (z)? And who knows what was within, when Clods of Blood appear so without? How did he lye grovelling in the Dust, Praying with Tears and strong Cries, *O my Father! If it be possible, let this Cup pass from me (a)?* He never.

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(z) *Luke 22. 44.* (a) *Matt. 26. 39.*

never seemed so concerned about his Corporal Sufferings, he seemed to long for them; and when he was led as a Lamb to the Slaughter, he opened not his Mouth till his Father fetched another Stroke at him, and then he cried with a loud Voice, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Matt. 27. 46. and to be forsaken at that time was sad. And to all that I have spoken under this Head, I must add, he suffered all this in a Good Cause. The Damned in Hell they suffer in Soul with a Vengeance, while the Smoak of their Torment ascends up for ever and ever, and have no rest Night nor Day: But they do not suffer in a Good Cause, but as Traytors and Rebels against the King of Heaven; and therefore instead of being Honoured on this Account, everlasting Shame and Confusion covers them; but Christ suffered all, that his Father might be Glorified, *John* 12. 27, 28. that God might with Honour to his Justice and Holiness save lost Man; he did it to Redeem precious Souls, and that such as were afar off might be made nigh, *Eph.* 2. 13. Thus you have heard somewhat of Christ's Sufferings; and how Honourable he is even above all the Saints and Martyrs on this Account.

*Eighthly*, Old Age is Honourable; even God himself hath Comanded us, *Lev.* 19. 32. to rise up before the Hoary Head, and to Honour the Face of the Old Man; and *Solomon* tells us, *Prov.* 16. 31. *The Hoary Head is a Crown of Glory, if it be found in the Way of Righteousness*; and if so, then Christ is Honourable. The Age of *Methuselah* is but as a Moment, if compared to this Ancient of Days; it was a long time from *Abraham* to the time of Christ's coming into the World, even Two and For-

ty Generations, *Matt.* 1. 17. and yet Christ tells the Jews; *Before Abraham was, I am,* *John* 8. 58. 'Tis partly on this Account that his Head and his Hair is set forth to be *White like Wooll, as White as Snow,* *Rev.* 1. 14. indeed, as to any Changeableness: So he is set forth to have his Locks Black as a Raven, to signify how free he is from any Decay; but as to Age, so his Hair is White as Snow: In a Word, he is the First-born among all his Brethren, he is from Everlasting; as well without Beginning of Years, as End of Days, *Heb.* 7: 3. He had a Glory with his Father before the World began; he made all Things, and so must be before all Things. If we Compute the Thousands of Years which have been from *Adam* to this Day, they will all appear but as Yesterday, if compared with Christ. Now put all these together, and then judge if Christ doth not excel all in Point of Honour, as far as *Sharon's* Rose excelled other Roses; and if Christ doth so far excel others in each of the forementioned Particulars, how much more when all those Badges of Honour do thus meet together in him at once? And thus I have spoken to the first thing which is esteemed among Men; and tho' I have spoken enough, one would think, in his Praise, to set every Soul a longing after him, and to make every Soul sick of Love for him, yet since our Ears are so dull of hearing, and our Hearts so slow to believe this Report, I shall briefly add a few things more, to shew you his Incomparable Excellency; for methinks 'tis sweet wading in these Streams which so plentifully do flow forth from this Living Fountain.

Second Thing highly esteemed among Men is  
Wisdom;

Wisdom; *Solomon* tells us in *Eccles.* 8. 1. *A Man's Wisdom maketh his Face to shine*; that is, it is an Excellent Ornament, and makes him admired by others. Where shall we find that Person that would not be thought Wise? The greatest Fool will be provoked to Anger if you tell him so. And as all are Ambitious to be esteemed Wise, so what Pains do some take in studying such things as will truly render them so? And how highly esteemed are such as have attained it, especially by all such as know the Excellency of it? None but Fools despise Wisdom, *Prov.* 1. 7. When Men have dived deep into Nature's Secrets, and have more especially made some good Progress in the Knowledge of Divine Mysteries, what an Ornament is it? And if so, how Excellent is Christ, since he far exceeds all in Wisdom? He is said to be *the Wisdom of God*, *1 Cor.* 1. 24. How did his Wisdom begin to shine forth even in his tender Years, when on Earth? *Luke* 2. 46, 47. *And all that heard him were Astonished at his Understanding and Answers*; and even his Enemies, which went with a design to take him, were themselves so taken with him, that they return with this Report of him, *Never Man spoke like this Man*, *John* 7. 46. And observe, they are Officers that make this Report; being none of the Meaner Sort they were the better able to judge of his Wisdom. If you single out the Wisest of Men that ever lived, you will find him come infinitely short of that Wisdom that is in Christ. I shall instance in *Solomon*, who was the wisest of Men, God himself bearing him Witness, *1 Kings* 4. 30, 31. and yet see what Christ saith, *Matt.* 12. 42. *The Queen of the South shall rise up in the Judgment with this Generation, and shall Condemn it; for*

*she came from the uttermost Parts of the Earth to hear the Wisdom of Solomon, and behold a greater than Solomon is here.* Christ is not only Wise, but Wisdom it self; and was it possible that the Wisdom of *Solomon*, and all the Wisdom of all the Wise Men that have been, now are, or ever shall be in this World, was to meet in one Man, yet the Wisdom of that Man would not so far exceed the Wisdom of a Babe, as the Wisdom of Christ would exceed the Wisdom of that Man; the difference between the former being but between Finite and Finite, but the difference between the latter is between Infinite and Finite, between which there is no Comparison to be made. All the Wisdom of this World is but Foolishness if compared to him; there is no Secret in Nature but what lyes open to him: He is thoroughly acquainted with all the true Causes and Effects of Things, even the Heart of Man, which is so hard to be known, is well known to him, and far better than to himself, John 2. 25. *And needed that any should testifie of Man, for he knew what was in Man.* And that which renders him far more Excellent, is his Wisdom in Spiritual Mysteries, and in this he exceeds the best of Men. *Paul* acknowledged he saw but darkly, as thro' a Glass; he saw but in part, and so could Prophecie but in part: But Christ is a Compleat Master of all these Divine Arts; he is the great Prophet of the Church, who is perfectly acquainted with all the deep Things of God, and herein is most Excellent; even as *S Sharon's* Rose did excel all other Roses. That is the Second thing wherein Christ excels all, even in Wisdom and Knowledge; all the Wisdom of the Angels, whether Good or Bad, being short of his.



Third Thing which is highly esteemed by the World, is Beauty. How much precious time is spent by some in Patching and Painting by the *Jezebels* of our Age? VVhat Immodest Garbs are worn by both Sexes? As if they were resolved to oppose at once, and that to the uttermost, both the Scripture and the Practice of the Saints of Old, and all to set off this Perishing Carcase to the best Advantage; that if possible, by Art they might supply Nature's Defects; that yet when all is done that can be done, all the Beauty in the VVorld, whether Natural or Artificial, is but meer Deformity, if compared to Christ, Cant. 5. 16. *His Mouth is most Sweet, yea, he is altogether Lovely*: And that perhaps is more than can be said of any of the Sons or Daughters of Men. You may see one hath one Part Beautiful, another hath another, but scarce any that are altogether Lovely; or so Beautiful but they might have been more Beautiful: But Christ is altogether Lovely, and so Compleat that nothing can be added to make him more Compleat; and so he far exceeds the Creatures in this respect: And 'tis Marvellous to think that all the VVorld should not be sick of Love for this Lovely and Beautiful Jesus.

*Objection.* But is it not said, Isa. 53. 2. *He hath no Form nor Comeliness, and when we shall see him there is no Beauty that we should desire him?* A like Text, Isa. 52. 14. *As many were astonied at thee, his Visage was so marred more than any Man, and his Form more than the Sons of Men.* How can we reconcile these Scriptures with what hath been spoken?

*Answer.* Nothing is more clear than that the Prophet's design, in those Places, is to shew what manner of Entertainment Christ should meet with

from the Carnal Jews, and to let us know how his Beautiful Face should be Vailed with the Flesh ; and if so, then this Knot may be easily untied, by distinguishing between what Christ is in himself, or to the Saints, and what he did once appear to be, and even now is, in the Opinion of Sinners ; for the Scripture sets forth the difference to be very great between Sinners and Saints, as to their esteem of Christ, 1 Cor. 1. 22, 23. *For we preach Christ Crucified unto the Jews a Stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks Foolishness ; but unto them which are called both Jews and Greeks, Christ the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God.* The Beauty of Christ, tho' great, is not discerned by the blind VWorld ; 'tis only the Eye of Faith that beholds this King in his Glory : To them that believe he is precious. 'Tis said of him, Rev. 1. 16. *And his Countenance was as the Sun shineth in his Strength ;* and 'tis only the Eye of Faith that is able to look upon this Bright and Glorious Sun.

Fourth Thing truly Excellent and Desirable; is Grace and Holiness ; and tho' I place this last, yet not as the least, but as that which in a more especial manner deserves to be largely insisted on ; for tho' this is not indeed much esteemed by the VWorld, yet is it in it self most Excellent and Desirable, as well as upon the account of the Blessed Effects it produces. *David* pronounces the Saints *the Excellent of the Earth*, Psal. 16. 3. And no doubt but he calls them the Excellent of the Earth as they were Saints ; yea, let me tell you, this is that which is Excellent in the sight of God : The more Holy we are, the liker to God we are ; and he can as soon cease to have any Esteem for himself as to put a Slight upon Holiness ; and he  
hath

hath told us, Prov. 12. 26. *The Righteous is more Excellent than his Neighbour* : If he is not esteemed so by Men, yet God esteems him so ; for *the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself,* Psal. 4. 3. The Righteous are his Jewels, which he prizes above all the World ; one Righteous *Noah* is more to him than all the World beside (b). God doth not value Men by their common Endowments whatsoever. If a Man hath never so much Worldly Honour and Wealth, if he hath attained never so much Wisdom and Knowledge in natural Arts and Sciences, if he was as Beautiful as *Absolom*, yet if he hath no Grace, God matters him not upon any of these Accounts ; if he hath not the Image of God in his Heart, and his Law Written there, tho' he could speak with all Tongues, he is but as *a sounding Brass, and a tinkling Cymbal*, in the Ears of God : Nor will he ever suffer him to see his Face with Comfort, Heb. 14. 12. The Poorest Beggar in Rags, who hath neither Food to Eat, nor Cloaths to Wear, nor a House to lay his Head in, yet if he hath but Grace, if he is but Holy, he is more dear to God than the most Puissant Prince that wants it ; as you may see in *Luke* 16. at large, concerning *Dives* and *Lazarus*. The Wicked in all their Pomp and Grandeur appear very Contemptible in the sight of God, but he Honours them that Fear him ; and as Grace and Holiness is the highest Excellency the best of Creatures can attain to, so this is to be found in Christ in a far more Excellent manner than in any of them. Christ is the Fountain, and all the Grace Communicated to us is but as a Drop to the Fountain, *John* 1. 14, 16.

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(b) Gen. 7. 1.

Grace and Holiness is in Christ Essentially, so is it not in us Creatures, whether Angels or Men. Those Angels which once were such Excellent Creatures, yet when once they had Sinned; were sent down to Hell, yet Angels still: The Angels which still retain their Primitive Holiness are charged with Folly, as being in their Natures capable of Sinning as well as the rest: So *Adam*, he was made after the Image of God, but he soon defaced that Image, yet remained in his Being; but Christ can as soon cease to be, as cease to be Holy, Harmless and Undeiled; he brought no Seed nor Spawn of Sin into the World with him, nor was there ever any Sin in his Life committed by him; and because the Glory and Excellency of Christ doth so much consist in this, I shall the more enlarge upon it, and shall shew you more generally and particularly how Christ excels all in this respect, as *S Sharon's* Rose did others.

If we consider his Obedience more generally, so it far excels any Obedience performed by us, and that in a Twofold respect, (1). As to his Delight in it, this as a Vein run thro' all his Performances. Delight and Cheerfulness is the Life of all our Obedience, and that without which it is not worthy of the Name: But alas! the Saints, yea, the best of Saints on Earth, come short in this. Alas! How heavily do we often drive? How ready are we to be weary when we should be running, and faint when we should be walking in God's Ways? If we engage in Duty how Sluggish and Slothful are we? And upon what light Occasions do we let slip precious Opportunities, which argues our Delight in such Works to be but little; and more especially do we hang back upon the appearance of the Cross, and are ready to slip the Neck

out of the Yoak when once it pinches. Good *Peter*, when once he apprehended any danger of suffering for Christ, tho' it would have been his Honour so to do, yet, Poor Man, to escape the Cross, he not only Lies, *saying, I know not the Man*, but begins to *Curse and to Swear* (c). Thus you see how backward we are to do and suffer, tho' it be according to the Will of God; and whoever thou art that Readeest this, if thou art not a Stranger to thy own Heart, I dare appeal to thee if thou dost not find sad cause to complain as *Paul*, *Rom. 7. 22, 23.* Dost thou not oft find those Wings clipt with which thou shouldest be mounting up towards Heaven, and those Legs feeble with which thou shouldest be running the Ways of God's Commandments; and that it is an easier thing to get the Body than the Heart to any Duty? But it was far otherwise with Christ, he performed his Obedience with the greatest Delight, *Psal. 40. 6, 7, 8. I delight to do thy Will, O God, &c.* *John 4. 31. My Meat is to do the Will of him that sent me, and to finish his Work*; yea, how Chearfully did he go where he knew he must suffer; and charged his Disciples that they should not make it known that he was the Son of God (d), lest it should discourage his Enemies from making any further Attempts to Crucifie him? So fearful was he (if I may so speak) lest he should escape their Rage, that when he knew it was for this End he came into the World, and when *Peter* would have perswaded him to save himself, tho' he had a dear Love to *Peter*, yet saith he, *Get thee behind me Satan* (e). And, (2.) As to the extent of his Obedience, so he excels us: Alas, in many things we

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(c) *Matt. 26. 74.* (d) *Luke 9. 20, 21.* (e) *Matt. 16. 23*

offend all : Not a Day nor Duty but some Sin is cleaving to us; but Christ did no Sin, he was a *Lamb without Blemish, and without Spot (f)*. Pilate, that was Judge, could say, *I find no fault in him at all*, John 18. 38. And before I pass this Head, let us learn thus much from it, that since his Obedience doth so far excel ours, it must be much safer for us to rely upon that, than upon any Obedience performed by us. No Wise Man will venture to cross the deep Ocean in a Leaking Vessel, when he may have free Passage in a Ship that is Sea Proof. God hath declared himself to be well pleased with his Son, *Matt. 3. 17*. But he may justly find fault with the best of us, and pronounce us (when we have done all we can) to be unprofitable Servants. 'Tis only by the Obedience of this One that any of us can be found Righteous, *Rom. 5. 18, 19*. and Wo, Wo to that Soul that is not found Interested in this perfect Obedience. And as I have shewn you how far his Obedience excels ours more generally, so I shall more particularly instance in some Graces which were found in him, in such a manner and measure as never were found in any of the Sons of Men.

*First*, Let us consider how eminently the Grace of Faith discovered it self in Christ. That Faith is strongest which remains unshaken under great Discouragements: 'Tis no hard Matter to believe Christ is ours when his Left Hand is under our Head, and his Right Hand Embraces us; or to believe God is our Friend when we have the sensible Tokens of his Love in our Hands, and can at the same time see the sweet Smiles of his Face :  
But

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(f) 1 Pet. 1. 19.

But then Faith is strong indeed, when we can steadfastly believe, tho' all things seem to make against us; and when that God, in whom we Trust, seems to threaten to destroy us; and if so, then we shall find such Faith to have been in Christ in the Days of his Flesh, as never was in any meer Man in the Flesh. Alas, our Faith, tho' true, is often Weak, and our Hand subject to Paralitick Shakings; we are ready to stagger at the Promise thro' unbelief. We find it enough to do to keep the Head above Water in a Calm; and no sooner doth a Storm arise, but then with *Peter, Lord, save me (g)*, while we feel our selves beginning to sink. If God hide but his Face from us, and doth but for a while suspend the Comfortable Manifestations of his Favour, how ready are we to fear he hath forgotten to be Gracious, and will be favourable no more? How subject are we, thro' unbelief, to have hard Thoughts of God, and to question whether he intends our Good in some Dispensations of his Providence towards us? And even when our Faith is strongest we have cause to cry out with Tears, *Lord, I believe; help thou my unbelief (h)*. But now Christ he was always strong in Faith, giving Glory to God: For under his greatest Trials, when God was dealing with him as a Vindictive Judge, and was emptying the Vials of his Wrath upon him, and hid his Fatherly Face from him, yet even then, *My God, my God*, Matt. 27. 46. Words, tho' few, yet full of Faith; observe, here were Soul Troubles and Bodily Troubles met together, and one Deep called to another, and yet the proud Waves could not go over him; but my God, my God,  
still.

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(g) *Matt. 14. 30.* (h) *Matt. 9. 24.*

still: Yea, when he lay Bleeding almost to Death in the Garden of those Wounds he had received from the immediate Hand of God, yet even then, *O my Father*, Matt. 26. 39. He earnestly prayed, with Submission to his Father's Will, that that Cup might pass from him, to let us see how unpleasant his Sufferings were to the Humane Nature, yet still owns him as his Father. His Faith was strong in his greatest Sufferings; and even when the Terrours of the Lord set themselves in Array against him, yet in the midst of all his Faith remained unshaken. And if we compare his Faith with the Faith of the best of Saints, we shall find the strongest Faith to be but weak to what the Faith of Christ was. Let us consider the Faith of *Abraham*, who by reason of that Act of his Faith in offering up *Isaac*, and believing God was able to raise him up another Seed, tho' he was Old, and *Sarah* in Nature past Child-bearing, was called the Father of the Faithful (i). Now tho' his Faith was herein great, yet not to be compared to the Faith that was in Christ. It was far easier to believe that the same God that had given *Abraham* a Son, when he so little expected such a thing, could cause *Sarah* to Conceive again, tho' Old, than for Christ to believe God was his Father when he hid his Face from him, and wrote such bitter things against him. We have another Instance of a strong Faith in *Job*, who could say under sore Afflictions of Body, yea, and of Soul too, tho' he slay me, yet will I trust in him, *Job* 13. 15. Now tho' this was a strong Act of Faith in *Job* (his Afflictions being at that time so great) yet not like that which was in Christ: *Job* indeed had

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(i) *Rom.* 4. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20.



had a bitter Cup put into his Hand, but not one Drop of Vindictive Wrath in it: He never was so deeply wounded within as to cause him to sweat Clods of Blood. So that forasmuch as his Sufferings were far greater than *Job's*, and of another kind, and yet his Confidence more firm, hence we have reason to conclude, that neither Faithful *Abraham*, nor Holy *Job*, had such strong Faith as Christ.

*Secondly*, If you consider his Patience, you will find this Grace shining forth in Christ in a wonderful manner. If we consider the Nature of Patience, we shall find it to be in him as it never was in any Man beside him: For the clearing of which consider, all bearing of Evil, tho' it may be seemingly without Discontent and Murmuring, is not properly Patience. If a Malefactor be never so silent while Punishment is inflicting, no Wise Man will call that Patience. 'Tis true Patience to bear Afflictions Cheerfully, and without Murmuring, which we have not deserved. And from hence we shall see how far Christ did excel all others in the Exercise of this Lovely Grace. One of the greatest Instances of Patience among Men, which we have upon Record in Scripture, is that of *Job* (k); yet *Job's* Patience is not worthy of the Name, if compared to Christ; for tho' he suffered much both from God and Men, yet his Sin had deserved that all these Things should come upon him. God himself had a special Hand in his Sufferings, and there was cause why he should be Dumb, not opening his Mouth, because he did it, *Psal.* 39. 9. It no ways becomes the Clay to say to the Potter, Why hast thou made me thus, when it

it might have been much worse? If *Job* had received some Evil from the Lord, he had also received much Good, and so had no cause to complain; and we find that when his Wife came to tempt him to Curse God because he had so Afflicted him, he withstood the Temptation on this very Consideration, *Job* 2. 10. *Shall we receive Good at the Hand of God, and shall we not receive Evil?* But now Christ suffered much from God and Man, and yet never did offend God, but always did the things which pleased him (1). Nor had he given any just cause of Offence to Man; nay, he was the greatest Friend to Man that ever was. He came into the World to save such as were lost; he took pity on Man when no Eye pitied him, and brought help when no Hand could. and coming on such a kind Errand, he might have expected better Entertainment from them, and that every Knee should have bowed to him, and that by one consent they should have done their utmost to make his Life Comfortable; but now for Christ to suffer so much from those that were so beholden to him, to be Buffeted, Blindfolded, Reviled, Spit upon, and at last cruelly Tormented on the Cross, and yet to be Patient under all, was Patience indeed. And further, had *Job* been never so Impatient it would have availed nothing. I am far from thinking this was the only thing, or chief thing, that moved *Job* to be silent; no, he saw the Justice and Goodness of God in all, and that moved him to be Patient; yet this must be acknowledged, all his Impatience, or any thing he could have done in such a way to free himself from his Sufferings, would have availed nothing.

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(1) *John* 8. 29. *Matt.* 3. 17.

thing. Nay, instead of finding relief hereby, he might but have made his Chain the more heavy, since his Impatience would have provoked God to add to his Afflictions. The Way to have God remove any Cross from us, is to be patient under it. But now Christ, he had Power to have eased himself of his Enemies, he cou'd have avenged himself of his Adversaries, he could have crush'd them before the Moth, he could have caused the Earth to have opened her Mouth and swallowed them up, or he could have commanded Fire from Heaven to have consumed them, but he would not, he would not suffer *Peter* to smite his Enemies, but reproveth him, and lovingly healed the Wound (m). We read that when his Enemies came to seek him, to the end they might know how able he was to destroy them, he did but speak, and beat them backward even with his Breath, *John* 18. 6. and yet notwithstanding *he gave his Back to the Smitters, and his Cheeks to them that plucked off the Hair; when he was Reviled, Reviled not again,* 1 *Pet.* 2. 23. In a Word, Tho' *Job* was Patient, he was not free from Impatience wholly, as you may see, *Chap.* 3. 1. and 9. 17. but Christ never uttered one such Word, *Isa.* 53. 7. *He was Oppressed, and he was Afflicted, yet he opened not his Mouth; he is brought as a Lamb to the Slaughter, and as a Sheep before her Shearers is Dumb, so he opened not his Mouth.* Christ never had one hard Thought of his Father on this account: Nor did he ever utter any railing Accusation against his Tormentors, but breathed out some of his last Words in most earnest Prayer to his Father for their

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(m) *John* 18. 10. *Luke* 22. 50, 51.

## 120. *Christ the most Excellent:*

their Pardon, *Luke 23. 34. Father, forgive them, they know not what they do.*

*Thirdly,* If we consider his Holy Zeal, how may it even shame the best of Saints living? Alas, we live as it were in the Frigid Zone, or else often under the same Climate with the Church of *Laodicea*, *Rev. 3. 16.* But see what is said of Christ, *John 2. 17. The Zeal of thine House hath eaten me up.* How great was his Zeal for God and Goodness? We, alas, are often afraid or ashamed to appear for God, and to be found doing our Duty, and especially when we meet with any opposition; we are oft more Zealous in the things which concern our selves, than in the things which concern the Glory of God; but it was not thus with Christ. 'Tis said of him, that *he went about doing Good*, *Acts 10. 38.* It seems it was his whole Work so to do. We find even in his Younger Years that he put a flight as it were upon his Parents, if compared to his Father's Honour. *Luke 2. 49. Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's Business?* He lost no Opportunity of doing Good, he was not slothful in Business, but fervent in Spirit; saith he, *I must work the Works of him that sent me while it is called to Day.* *John 9. 4.* Or if we consider his Zeal in opposition to Evil, how far doth he exceed us. Alas, we oft see and hear Sin committed, and are afraid to speak against it by Way of Reproof; and the greater the Persons are which commit such Faults, and the more Danger we are in for reproving such, the more fearful we are there are but few *John Baptists* that dare reprove a *Herod* for his beloved Sin, *Mat. 14. 4.* but few *Elijahs* that dare reprove an *Ahab*; but now our Lord Christ feared not the Faces of Men; he

he was no Flatterer, but a faithful Reprover; he boldly told his Grand Enemies the *Pharisees*, they were a *Generation of Vipers* (n), and of *their Father the Devil* (o); but I shall not enlarge on this.

*Fourthly*, And the last Grace I shall mention, is that Lovely Beautifying Grace of Humility: As this Grace is Lovely in the sight of God and good Men, so it was visible in Christ when he was here in the World, as it ~~was~~<sup>ever</sup> was in any beside him. Alas, how dimly doth this Grace shine forth in the best of Saints? And how ready is Pride to get the upper Hand? If one hath Riches in the World, he is apt to be proud of them, notwithstanding the uncertainty of them, and the great account he must give for them. If another hath Beauty, he is ready to be proud of that, and to forget it must soon be turned into Deformity. If another hath but Gifts and Parts, or doth but fancy he hath, he is ready to be Proud of them, and to climb up into the highest Seat in the Sinagogue, and hath not Patience to stay till it be said to him, Friend, come up higher: How are these as Wings to some, by which they soar so high in Admiration of their own Excellencies, till all below seem as Dwarfs, if compared to themselves. And I would to God I could say that the Saints are not proud of their Grace which is bestowed so freely upon them: How ready is he that is Strong to despise him that is Weak in the Faith? But sure I am, we shall find nothing of this in Christ, but the greatest Humility in all he did. Never did *S Sharon's* Rose so exceed other Roses, as Christ exceeds all in Humility.

And

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(n) *Mat.* 3. 7. (o) *John* 8. 44.

And since I have compared him to others in other Graces, I shall also shew you how far he excels the most Eminent Saints we have upon Record in this Grace also. *Moses* is the most Eminent Instance Recorded in Scripture beside Christ; almost every Child can tell you *Moses* was the meekest Man, *Numb.* 12. 3. yet not to be compared to Christ. If we consider the Cause why *Moses* was so stiled, we shall find him far short of Christ. One great reason was, his leaving the Honour of *Pharaoh's* Court, to leap as it were into the Furnace of Affliction; and in going to be a Guide to the Contemptible *Israelites* that were treading Clay; and indeed it was a wonderful thing, and that for which he well deserved to be so stiled; for where is the Man that would have stooped so low, that would despise a Throne to embrace the Dunghil, that would leave such Honour for Shame and Contempt? But alas, what was this to what Christ did? *Moses* left a King's Court indeed, but no doubt a wicked Place, where he must have seen his God dishonoured, which could have been no Advantage to his Soul, nor could he on this account have taken any true delight in it: But Christ left the Court Royal in Heaven, where there was an innumerable Company of Angels, and Spirits of Just Men made perfect (*p*); Company far more delightful to him than any that he could enjoy on Earth. And further, *Moses* was but a Man, and Born in a low Condition; and his Humility could scarce bring him to a meaner Condition than once he had been in, when in the Ark of Bull-rushes: But Christ was the mighty God,

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(*p*) *Heb.* 12. 23.

God (*q*), and of a far more Noble Pedigree than the most Puissant Prince, being the Prince of the Kings of the Earth (*r*). And yet further, as *Moses* was not so High, so neither did he stoop so Low as Christ: God indeed led *Moses* through the Wilderness to humble him, and it was a mean Condition to lye so long in Tents, to have his chief Fare upon Bread and Water; yet we do not read that *Moses* gave his Back to the Smiters, nor his Cheeks to them that plucked off the Hair (*s*), we never read in his lowest Condition that he was Spit upon, Buffeted, or Blindfolded, all which were true of Christ: Nor did he Die such a shameful Death, God himself Buried him in an extraordinary Manner, and no Man knows of his Sepulchre (*t*). But Christ suffered a Shameful, Painful, Ignominious Death, by the Hands of Wicked and Merciless Men. So that from hence you may see how Christ did excel *Moses* in this Lovely Grace. And next unto *Moses*, we may suppose the blessed Apostles in this respect to have sat in the lowest Seat: But yet we read of their Pride, as well as Humility, as in *Luke* 22. 24. *And there was also a Strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.* Scarce ever did Pride more appear in any Saints than in this Case; our Lord had told them that one of them would betray him; now one would have thought that this sad News should have been to their Pride, as Water thrown upon a Flame, and that the Thoughts of parting with their Dear Lord, and the Just Cause each one had to fear lest he should have been the Instrument to betray him,

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should

should have given their Pride a deadly Wound; but alas, alas, even while they were saying, is it I? And, is it I? They were also striving which of them should be the greatest. But I am loth to Rake any farther into this Dust, since my Design is not to degrade the Apostles, but to magnifie Christ; for we do not find any such Ambition in him to be above others, but the contrary; and yet if he had, it would not have been Pride in him, as it was in them. O! How did our Dear Lord lay himself as it were below all, and while they were striving who should be highest and greatest, he is striving to be least. Remarkable is that Passage, where we read of his Washing his Disciples Feet, *John* 13. 4, 5. O Humility! What, the Lord to Wash the very Feet of Servants! *Peter* as Amaz'd at his Humility, resolves he shall never Wash his Feet, he thought it too mean an Office for Christ; and indeed so it was, and yet he performs it. Thus have I shown you how he excelled all the Saints in this Respect. And before I finish this Head, I shall consider the greatness of his Humility absolutely, for it is scarce fit to make any Comparison between him and any Saint that ever lived in this respect: And to this End I shall Consider him from his Birth to his Death.

If we consider him in his Birth, how doth his Humility shine forth? O! What an amazing Consideration is it, that Christ should put himself into a Capacity of Dying, that he should come from his Royal Seat of Glory, to dwell in a Tabernacle of Clay, whose Foundation was in the Dust. 'Tis judg'd Humility to a wonder for a King to Lodge in a poor Cottage, tho' but



but one Night; how much more for Christ, the King of Kings, to take up his Abode for ever in this House of Clay. O! VVhat Humility in Christ, to lay aside his Royal Robes, to be Cloathed with Skin! Had Christ assumed a Body far more Glorious than the Sun, and so dwelt among us, it would have been a great Condescension in him; but for the Word to be made Flesh, and so to dwell among us, is Humility to a wonder! Christ might have thought this a reflection on his Honour, since all Flesh had Corrupted themselves. But O! How low did the Blessed Jesus stoop to draw us up out of the Pit! It was a thing never heard of before in the Succession of Ages, that the Son of the Highest should reside in so low and mean Built a Tabernacle. Who could once have thought if God had not Revealed it, that ever he should be Born in Time, that lay in the Father's Bosom before Time. When the Prophet had said, unto us a Son is Born, &c. he adds, and *his Name shall be called Wonderful*, Isa. 9. 6. And if we consider him as Born of such a Woman, we shall see a greater Wonder: No doubt she was Gracious, yet far below many in the VVorld, who might be as Gracious as she. Now if Christ would have so far humbled himself as to be Born of a VVoman, yet he might have chose some Queen for his Nursing-mother, to have Born him upon her Sides, and dandled him upon her Knees. If Christ would become a Surety for us, and Die a Sacrifice in our Room and Stead, it was necessary he should assume a Body, the Divine Nature being impassable; but this he might have done and never have been Born. He that at first formed Man out of the Dust,

could so have formed a Body for himself. Or suppose him under a necessity to be the Seed of the Woman, this he might have been, and yet Born of Noble Parents. But Christ, to show his Humility, chose to be Born of a mean Virgin, and to be the reputed Son of a Carpenter: And we find how Contemptible this rendered him in the Eyes of the World, *Mat. 13. 55. Is not this the Carpenter's Son? Is not his Mother called Mary? Not Madam, no, nor Mistress, but Mary,* to denote her low Esteem in the World. And we find that even *Mary* herself was filled with Admiration upon this account, *Luke 1. 48. For he hath regarded the low Estate of his Handmaid, &c.* We, alas, are ready to be ashamed of our Parents, especially if we are brought to Honour, and they are Poor and Low in the World; but Christ aimed not at the Pomp and Grandeur of the World, and therefore, tho' he well knew how Contemptible this would render him to the World, yet made this his Choice. Nor is this all, but if we look to the manner of his Birth we shall see more of his Humility; for tho' the manner of his Birth is well known to us, yet I fear not duly considered. What, the King of Glory lye among Beasts! What, must a Manger be the Cradle for the Holy Child Jesus! O! Whither hath his Love and Humility carried him! Here is the Lilly in the Valley indeed.

Here we may see the Son of the Highest taking the lowest Room. Christ had no Stately Building, no Ceiled House, nor Hung Room to lye in. Ah, Sirs, had any of us been Born in  
such

such a Condition, it would have made no Blush, as long as we had Lived when told of it. Then judge what Humility it was in Christ, that he that before had the Heaven for his Throne, and the Earth for his Footstool, and had been lying in the Bosom of the Father, should now come and lye in a cold nasty Stable, and not be ashamed of it neither. O! What a Vail did he put upon his Honour, while he stoops almost below the Condition of the meanest of the Sons of Men; and chose to be Born in a Stable, when he might have expected the most Royal Palace, and that the Great Ones of the Earth should have given their Attendance at his Birth, O! Humility.

And as at his Birth, so if we consider his Life, we shall see yet more of this Lovely Grace. It was prophesied of him, *Zech. 9. 9. Behold thy King cometh unto thee, he is Just, having Salvation, Lowly, &c.* And so it came to pass; he came as a Pattern of Humility to us, *Mat. 11. 29. Learn of me, for I am Meek and Lowly in Heart, &c.* Every Step of his Life discovered his Humility, you may discern it in his Company. The Brave Spirits of our Age chuse to keep Company with some as great, or greater than themselves, and almost scorn to be seen in the Company of such as are Poor and Low in the World, lest their Honour should be eclipsed hereby; but Christ chose Poor Contemptible Fishermen for his Companions, such as were not Adorned with Humane Literature. How Narrow was his Possession? How Mean his Food? Yea, how did he discover his Humility in his Subjection to his Parents? As Christ was God, so the Virgin

that bare him was first formed by him, and in that respect was more properly her Lord than her Son, and yet he became obedient to her, *Luke 2. 51.*

And Lastly, If we look to him in his Death, there we shall find him Humbling himself. It was Humility in Christ to put himself into a capacity of Dying, but more, actually to Die, and especially to Die such a Death as the Death of the Cross, it being reputed a most shameful Death, *Heb. 12. 2. Who for the Joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, despising the Shame, &c.* It was not only a painful but a shameful Death, and yet he was not ashamed to Die such a Death, *Phil. 2. 8. And being found in Fashion as a Man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto the Death of the Cross.* We find that Great Men when they Die as Malefactors, usually have the Honour to be Beheaded; but Christ sought no Honour at his Death. He was put to open Shame, and yet despised it, judging it as nothing, if thereby he might but finish his Work, and preserve a Remnant from everlasting Shame and Contempt. A King he was indeed, but had no Honour shown him by Men at his Death: He had many Spectators to attend, but it was to Secure him, and not to Admire him. Some bowed the Head indeed, but it was in Contempt and Derision. They set a Crown upon his Head, but it was of Thorns, rather to Torment him, than Honour him; they put a Scepter in his Hand, but it was a contemptible Reed, as if that was good enough for him. They gave him Wine to Drink, but mixt it with Gall, as if his Cup had not been Bitter

Bitter enough; and so denied him that Common Favour which they were wont to show to the worst of Criminals: Nor did they give him it in a Gold or Silver Cup, but in a Sponge. His Company was most Contemprible, he was numbered with Transgressors, and died for Rebels, even the Just for the Unjust; O Humility!

Thus I have at last finished my Doctrinal Part, wherein I have given you only some Taste of that which I might have fed you more plentifully with, well knowing how ready the Old Man is to nauseate even Angels Food, when, like the Manna, it falls plenteously at our Tent Doors; I have therefore only brought you some Clusters, which I pluck'd from the Tree of Life with my own Hand, that so you that are Saints may see 'tis a good Land you are going to, *even a Land flowing with Milk and Honey*: And that you might not be Faint or Weary in your Way thither, or be discouraged, either because of the Narrowness of the Way, the Difficulties that may attend you therein, or because of the Evil Reports you may hear of the Land of Promise. All I shall add, shall be to apply this Truth to our selves, which indeed is one great thing I have aimed at; there are several profitable Uses will naturally flow from this Sweet Doctrine, as Streams from a full Fountain.

## U S E

- First*, Of Examination.
- Secondly*, Of Reproof.
- Thirdly*, Of Information.
- Fourthly*, Of Exhortation.
- Lastly*, Of Consolation.

Is Jesus Christ such an Excellent Person as you have heard? How should this put us upon the most diligent Examination, to try whether he is ours, whether we are Interested in him, or not: To try whether he that is the Chiefest among Ten Thousand is our Beloved and our Friend. If Christ was not thus Excellent, it would not so much Concern us to make sure of an Interest in him. 'Tis not enough for us to hear what Christ is in himself, or what he will be to all his Members, unless we are of that Number; for as it is not enough to fill us, that we hear of Food, unless we eat; or to hear of Cloaths to cover us, unless we put them on; as it is not enough to Cure a Wound, that we hear of a Healing Medicine, unless we do apply it to our Sore; as it is not enough to enrich us, that we hear of a large Possession, unless we have a just Right and Claim thereunto; so no more is it enough to make us happy, that we hear what Christ is, if we are not interested in him: For as a Poor Man may Starve, living next Door to a Rich Man, for want of being one of his Family; so many that have heard much of Christ, will yet Perish for want of an Interest in him; whose Condemnation will be much aggravated by their Contempt of the joyful Sound. All will not partake of the Benefits purchased by Christ, nor be found to be Related to him; Christ's Flock is but a little Flock. The Way to Heaven is Narrow, and but few will find it, and therefore there is need to Examine our selves, *2 Cor. 13. 5. Examine your selves whether ye be in the Faith, prove your own selves; know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you except ye be Reprobates?* And no doubt but the Apostle knew this

this Work to be necessary, or he would never have so earnestly pressed to it; and tis observable, he doth not exhort us to examine how oft we Pray; Read, Hear, or Receive the Sacrament, nor how much we give in Charity to the Poor; no, nor how much we have suffered in a good Cause; well knowing, that though these things were good, and highly commendable, yet all these would avail nothing without an Interest in Christ. Nor doth he bid us Examine or Enquire what is in Christ, or what is Purchas'd by him, but to enquire whether Christ is in us, knowing otherwise his Benefits would avail us nothing. Nor doth he exhort us to examine others, but our own selves, knowing it could afford but poor Comfort to hear that others were happy, if we were miserable; or to hear that others were made nigh, if we remained afar off. Nor doth he speak as if a light Examination would serve in this weighty Matter, but we must examine, prove, know, all which do denote the most diligent Scrutiny that can be made. And indeed there is Cause for it, not only as it is that on which our Salvation depends, (I mean our being in Christ) but also forasmuch as it is that in which poor Creatures are subject to be mistaken. Where shall we find a Man in this professing Nation, but what hopes to be saved by Jesus Christ? They have some general Notions of Christ's being a Saviour, and themselves being Sinners, and so many take up with a groundless Hope that he will save them. Now since we are naturally so apt to be deceived, I shall lay down some sure Rules, to try whether Christ is ours, and we his: Only let me entreat you faithfully to compare your  
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selves hereby. I shall only mention Three special Marks and Signs of our being interested in Christ, and they are not only peculiar to some strong Saints, but common to all that are united to him; yea, so common, that such as want them can never make out their Interest in him. As First, A Cordial Reliance on him. Secondly, a Dear Love to him. Thirdly, Sincere Desires and Endeavours after a universal Conformity to him.

1. Sign, is a Cordial Reliance and Dependance on him for Life and Salvation. By Nature we have high Thoughts of our selves, and *being ignorant of God's Righteousness, we go about to Establish our own Righteousness*, Rom. 10. 3. We see no need of Christ, but think our selves full and rich: And if Conscience at any Time begins to smite us, and to set our Sins in order before us, the only Plaisters we use to heal this Wound, is to reform our Lives, and to make Vows and Promises of living better for the Time to come; and thus we spend our Carnal Days. Ah, but when once the Spirit comes to Work savingly in us, he demolishes this strong Hold, leaves not one Stone upon another of this *Babel*, tho' before we thought its Height would reach unto Heaven. This *Dagon* falls now flat to the Earth before the Ark, and only the Stump remains. He now plucks down these false Props on which we leaned, and removes those Pillows on which we so long had securely slept. He now rends the Vail from off our Understandings, that so we may see the Plague of our Hearts, and may see Sin to be exceeding sinful; and till this is done, we shall never  
come



come to Christ; we shall never flee to Christ, the City of Refuge, till we see the Avenger pursuing us at our Heels; we shall never come to the Ark, till, like the Dove, we can find no Place else to set our Feet on. But now when all Confidence in the Flesh fails, and the poor Soul sees no help at Hand, Lord, thinks the Soul, what shall I do? What will become of me? Where shall I fly for Help? But now the Spirit goes further, and shows the Soul, that tho' there is no Help to be had in it self, yet God hath laid Help upon One Mighty to save, and now points the Soul to a Crucified Jesus; see yonder thy Help is to be had in that bleeding, dying Sacrifice: He now shows the Soul the Infinite Value of his Blood, and that he is the Father's free Gift to lost Sinners; and that they may come to him *without Money, and without Price*; and that he that cometh to him *he will in no wise cast out*: Well, thinks the Soul, this is good News indeed; this is the good *Samaritan* indeed; then there is hopes for me: For tho' I am unworthy, yet worthy is the Lamb; and thus the Soul casts it self wholly on Christ, and begins to rejoice in Christ Jesus, leaving others if they will to put Confidence in the Flesh. The difference between one savingly wrought upon, and one that is not, may in this Case be fitly Illustrated by the Raven and the Dove, which *Noah* sent out of the Ark: The Ark was a lively Type of Christ; and you read how *Noah* first sent forth the Raven, which returned no more; afterwards he sent forth the Dove, but finding no rest for her Feet, she returned to the Ark. But is it not strange, that when the Waters were declining, the Raven that went out first should stay out, and yet the

Dove

Dove afterwards find no rest for her Feet? Could not the Dove stay out as well as the Raven? I conceive the reason why she could not, did arise from their different Natures: The Raven in all probability might light and live upon the Dead Carcasses, which were floating upon the Water, and that might keep her from coming to the Ark; and the Dove being of a pure Nature, could not feed on the same Fare, nor rest upon such filthy Carcasses, and so returns to the Ark. Thus a Carnal Man, he feeds upon the Carcasses of his Dead Duties, goes from Duty to Duty, and so long as he can find these bear him up, and keep him from sinking, he will never return to Christ; but a renewed Soul cannot find any rest in these, and therefore to Christ he must go. Thus you see how the Soul that is savingly wrought upon is made to rely wholly on Christ: But the great Enquiry should be, Reader, is it thus with me? For as it is not enough to hear of Christ, unless we find them in us: No more then it was enough for *Israel* to know that the Blood upon their Door Posts was the Token of their Deliverance (v), which they might have known, and yet have died for want of it. Canst thou then form an inward Sense and Feeling of those things upon thy own Soul? Set to thy Seal that this is true? Hath God convinced thee that thou wast conceived in Sin, and brought forth in Iniquity? Hath he so far convinced thee of the Plague of thy own Heart, as to make thee Cry out with the greatest Abhorrence of thy self, unclean, unclean (u)? Hath he made thee to see Sin to be exceeding Sinful

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(v) *Ex.* 12. 22. (u) *Isa.* 6. 5.

ful (*w*), and thy self near to Destruction for it? Hath he Emptied thee of all Confidence in the Flesh, and made thee to see that when thou hast done all, thou art an unprofitable Servant (*x*), and that all thy Righteousness is but as filthy Rags (*y*). Hath God made thee to see thy need of Christ, and thy undone State and Condition without him; and how that either Christ or Hell must be thy Portion? Hast thou been made to see his Excellency, and that he is the chiefest among Ten Thousand? Hast thou been made to come to him weary and heavy laden, that so thou mightest find Rest (*z*), and hast thou cast thy Burden upon him? Hast thou been made to Glory in nothing but the Cross of Christ, as *Paul* was, *Gal. 6. 14.* and to say, I will make mention of thy Righteousness, and of thine only (*a*)? Hast thou been made to see that neither Circumcision nor Uncircumcision avails any thing, and that Christ is all (*b*)? Hast thou been helped to rejoice in Christ Jesus, and at the same time to have no confidence in the Flesh (*c*)? Hast thou been made to see that *without shedding of Blood there is no Remission* (*d*)? Hast thou been made to see him to be the only Ark that can secure thee from the Floods of God's Wrath, the only City of Refuge? And hast thou fled thither for security from the Avenger? If thou hast found it to be thus with thee, cheer up poor Soul, this sweet Rose of *Sharon's* thine; thy Dependance on him proves thy Interest on him. But if upon Examination thou findest that thou makest Flesh thy Arm, and that thy Heart departeth from the  
Lord;

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(*w*) *Rom. 7. 13.* (*x*) *Luke 17. 10.* (*y*) *Isa. 64. 6.* (*z*) *Matt. 11. 28.* (*a*) *Psal. 71. 16.* (*b*) *Col. 3. 11.* (*c*) *Phil. 3. 3.* (*d*) *Heb. 9. 22.*

Lord, thou hast neither Part nor Portion in this Matter, thy Heart is not right in the Sight of God: By depending on any thing besides Christ for Life and Salvation, thou evidently discoverest thy self to be no true Friend to the Bridegroom.

2. Sign of an Interest in Christ, is a Dear Love and Affection to him: Faith in Christ and Love to Christ are inseparable. Hence Faith is said to work by Love in *Gal. 5. 6.* As nothing will prove our Interest in Christ till we have Faith, so nothing will prove our Faith to be saving if we have not Love accompanying it: And proportionable to the Strength of our Faith will our Love be. The Eye of Faith sees a loveliness in Christ, it sees what love Christ bare to the Soul, and hence the Soul cannot but love, being first loved, *1 John 4. 19. We love him because he first loved us.* What, Love me, saith the Soul! What such an unworthy, sinful, undone, wretched Creature as me! And now the Soul having seen somewhat of what is in him, and of what it receives from him, cannot but be Sick of Love for him: *Now stay me with Flaggons, comfort me with Apples, for I am Sick of Love (e).* Now farewell Father, Mother, Sister, Brother, and all, rather than Christ. Now the Soul looks on other things with a Contemptible Eye, if compared to Christ; and is almost wholly taken up with the Thoughts and Admiration of him. Now it rejoices if he smiles, and mourns if he frowns: Now the Soul begins to love what he loves, and hate what he hates: Now any thing of his Image is Dear and Precious for his sake: Now  
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(e) *Cant. 2. 5.*

the Soul begins to have some Longings to be with him, to behold his Glory. But, Reader, is it thus with thee? Hast thou found him putting in his Hand by the Hole of thy Door, till thy Bowels have Moved towards him (f). What is it that hath the greatest share in thy Affections, the World or Christ? What wouldest thou chuse if it was left to thee? Suppose the Pomp and Grandeur of this World was put into one Scale, and Christ, yea, a naked despised Christ, in the other Scale, which wouldest thou chuse? Assure thy self, if none but Christ will satisfy thee, thou shalt have him: Yea, thou hast him already, thou canst not miss of an Interest in him, that hast so Dear a Love for him: Whoever perishes, thou canst not. Can we once think that when Christ comes to Judge the World at the last Day, that he will Sentence that Soul to Hell, to be for ever separated from him, who bore so Dear a Love to him, that he could have almost have leaped into Hell, if there he could but have enjoyed more Intimacy with him? Can we suppose that he caused this Love-Sickness, that so the Soul should Die of that Disease? No sure, our dearest Love to him, is the strongest Argument of our Interest in him; and one that will not easily be confuted. See then if thy Heart is Single for Christ, see if thou hast given a Bill of Divorce to all other Lovers, and hast sent them away. Hast thou taken him for thy Portion and exceeding great Reward? Art thou resolv'd to abide with him, and for him, and never to leave him? If so, cheer up sweet Soul, his Love is as Dear to thee as  
thine

thine can be to him, *Hos.* 3. 3. But if thou hast not seen him to be lovely, yea, most lovely, if thou hast<sup>been</sup> made to count all things but Dung for him (*g*), thou hast Cause to question whether thou hast an Interest in him; for to them that believe he is precious (*b*). The Carnal World do not so much Slight him, but the Saints do as much Prize him; and while to the former he is a Stone of Stumbling, to the latter he is the Foundation Stone; he that is nothing at all to the one, is all in all to the other: And tho' the one will not part with a Lust for him, yet the other had rather part with their Lives for him, than lose him.

3. Try your Interest in him by your earnest Desires and Endeavours after a universal Conformity to him. Christ will be a King to Rule where he is a Priest to Save: The Blood and the Water must go together. I do not say the Saints are free from all Infirmities; yet for any to delight in Sin, or to be frequently overcome by Sin, is a sad sign of a Christless Soul. Sin and Christ are those Two Masters which no Man can serve at the same time; he that loves Christ, cannot but hate Sin, that is so contrary to him. When Christ becomes sweet to a Soul, Sin will be bitter: When once a Soul comes to look by Faith unto a Dying Jesus, and sees how much he suffered, and for what, when it sees he was wounded for Transgression, and bruised for Sin, O! How it fills the Soul with the greatest Abhorrence of Sin, and with the strongest Resolutions against it. And now the Soul begins to reason thus, Shall

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I sin and crucifie the Lord afresh, and put him to open Shame? Shall I give him more Gall and Vinegar to drink? God forbid; how can I do this and sin against so Dear a Redeemer, and against such Dying Love? How can I do any thing against him that hath done so much for me? And thus to hate and forsake Sin, is a Scripture Sign of a Man in Christ, and the contrary a black Mark of one that is in the Gall of Bitterness, and Bonds of Iniquity. Such only are the Blessed Ones, *which bear the Word of God, and keep it,* Luke 11. 28. *If any Man be in Christ he is a new Creature,* 2 Cor. 5. 17. Christ is ashamed of such as profess themselves Christians, and yet do not walk as he walked. Luke 6. 46. *And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the Things which I say?* As if he had said, Either obey me as your Lord; or else do not mock me with such a Title. And as Christ is ashamed of such here, so neither will he own them hereafter, but will say, *Depart from me, ye Workers of Iniquity* (i). I know not whence you are. As Christ will not save any Soul for its Holiness, so neither will he save any but such as he makes Holy. Heb. 12. 14. *Follow Peace with all Men, and Holiness, without which no Man shall see the Lord.* Such as are not by Grace made meet for Heaven, will never be found to have a good Title thereunto. Such as are not made in some Measure conformable to Christ, shall never come in for a Share of those special Priviledges and Benefits purchased by him. Christ the Righteous Judge will certainly *reward every Man according to his Work; to them who by patient Continuance in Well-doing seek for Glo-*

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(i) Luke 13. 35, 26, 27.

ry, and Honour, and Immortality, Eternal Life : But unto them that are Contentious, and do not obey the Truth, but obey Unrighteousness, Indignation, and Wrath, &c (k). The Wages of Sin is Death (l). Such as sow to the Flesh shall of the Flesh reap Corruption (m). Let none therefore deceive themselves with Hopes that they believe in Christ, whose Lives are not conformable to him ; for Faith without Works is dead (n), and evidently proves such to be in a dead State in whom it is found. A good Tree cannot bring forth evil Fruit (o), nor dare a Saint continue in Sin that Grace may abound (p) ; yea, let me add, a Person who is truly gracious he will not only obey God in some Precepts, but will endeavour to obey him in all things : He not only will hate and forsake some Sins, but will to his utmost Power oppose all Sin, Psal. 119. 104. As every Sin is contrary to the Nature of Christ, so also to the Nature of every Christian, so far as he is renewed ; and as the Commission of One Sin lays that Man obnoxious to Wrath, that is under the Covenant of Works, so the Approbation of One known Sin proves that Person to be under the Covenant of Works. Freely to consent to any known Sin, proves there is in our Hearts a Love to all Sins. A Saint who is truly interested in Christ can say as David, Psal. 26. 12. *My Foot standeth in an even Place*, to signify that he did not halt in God's Ways. Yea, let me say this, a Child of God dare not allow himself to live in the least Sin ; for as we hate a Toad, not so much for its Bigness as its Nature ; and the nearer it comes to

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(k) Rom. 2. 7, 8, 9, 10. (l) Rom. 6. 23. (m) Gal. 6. 8.  
 (n) Jam. 2. 20. (o) Matt. 12. 33, 35. (p) Rom. 6. 1.



us, the more our Hearts rise against it : So in this Case a Saint hates Sin in others, but more in himself : A Saint will tremble to see this Viper fasten on his Hand, but more to feel it creep into his Bosom. This made the Blessed *Paul* so cry out of his Body of Death, *Rom.* 7. 24. Tho' none could accuse him for that, yet he comes in as a Witness against himself. Thus you have heard how we may judge of our Interest in Christ by our Conformity to him, by doing what he commands, and by hating and forsaking what he forbids. But, Reader, is it thus with thee? Art thou willing to cut off a Right Hand, and to pluck out a Right Eye (q), at Christ's Command? Canst thou say in Sincerity to every Idol of thy Heart, Get ye hence, what have I to do any more with Idols(r)? Canst thou say, Christ is that One Lover thou hast Espoused, and after him will I go? And art thou yielding thy self to the Lord in a humble and holy Walk? Is the Law of God written in thy Heart (s)? And art thou conforming thereto in all things in thy Life? If so, thou hast Reason to take Comfort as One that is interested in this Lovely Jesus; but not else. But that I may not wound them that God would have me heal, I must add One necessary Caution, which is, that you do not conclude you are Strangers to Christ meerly because of some Infirmities, which you are mourning for, and groaning under: For if none should be found to be in Christ but such as are wholly free from Sin, where is the Man that will get to Heaven? Even the Blessed *Paul* not only complains of his Body of Death, but also of a Thorn in the Flesh, which perhaps might be

some Infirmity or Sin he found himself in Danger to be overcome by. God is pleased for wise Ends to suffer it thus to be ; but know for thy Comfort, if thou mournest for these Infirmities as *Paul* did, if thou prayest and strivest against them, and shunnest all Temptations and Occasions leading thereunto, thou may'st be Dear to Christ notwithstanding: He may hate thy Failings, and yet dearly love thy Person. When *Peter* through the Violence of a Temptation had fallen into Sin, tho' the Sin was great, and attended with aggravated Circumstances, yet it being so contrary to his Design, how tenderly doth Christ carry it to him? And instead of threatening him with Hell and Damnation, only looks upon him with a loving and compassionate Look (t). As if he had said, Poor *Peter*, is this the End of thy Vows and Promises? Which Look melted poor *Peter's* Heart. He that hath made it our Duty to restore such as are overtaken with a Fault, will not cast off his People for every Fault ; no, the Covenant of Grace is better ordered than so. I shall Illustrate the Point in Hand thus, A Master goes a Journey, and designing to be absent some time, he calls his Servant, and commits the Care of his Goods unto him, and gives him a strict Charge to watch ; the Servant does so ; but by and by the House is beset with Thieves ; the Servant cries out with all his Might, Good Neighbours help, or I shall be overcome ; but finding no Help come, he resolves to encounter with them himself, and to make the most Vigorous Resistance he can in his own Strength, and doth so: But they being many to One, the House

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(t) *Luke* 22. 61.

is broke open, the Master receives much damage; his Goods are rifled, and the Servant lyes groaning and bleeding of the Wounds he hath received, and almost ready to give up the Ghost: At last the Master returns, who finds his House broke open, his Goods gone, his Servant sorely wounded; who tells him a mournful Story, how he cried for Help, but finding none, did the utmost he could to secure his Master's House and himself; but being overpowered by the Enemies, he received these Wounds. Now can we suppose this Master to lay any more upon this Servant? How cruel would he be to beat such a Servant, or to turn him out of his Service on this Account? Nay, have we not Cause to believe that any Master in such a Case (especially a good Man) would take Care to bind up his Wounds gently, and be at any Charge for his Cure? Have we not Ground to believe that instead of Correcting his Servant he would highly Commend him, and say, Well done Good and Faithful Servant? Would he not judge him still fit to be in the Family, tho' he was overcome, since he did his utmost to preserve his Master's Goods and himself from these Wounds? Sure if he should not carry it so to him, he would discover himself more cruel and unmerciful than the Thieves.

To apply this now to our present Case, Christ is gone to receive a Kingdom, with a Promise after some time to return; mean while he gives the Soul a Charge to watch against Sin, and to shun all Temptations: The poor Believer doth so, but by and by Temptations beset the Soul, and Sin lyeth at the Door ready to get in upon every Occasion; the believing Soul being sensible thereof, and fearing he should be overcome, seeing himself

surrounded on every Side, begins to make most pitiful Moan, and earnestly, and with many Tears, sends up strong Cries for Help: Saith the poor Soul, I can go nowhere, do nothing, but I am in Danger of being overcome by Sin: If I am but employed in my Trade, in Buying or Selling, I there meet with a Temptation to lie or to deal unjustly; Lord, help! If I see or hear Sin committed by others, instead of reproving for it, and being vexed and grieved for it, my wicked Heart is ready to be pleased with it; Lord, help! If I hear my self but reviled by others, tho' for Jesus sake, instead of rejoicing that I am counted worthy to suffer Shame for his Name, I am tempted to revile again, or else study to be revenged upon them; and instead of forgiving them, am ready to rejoice at any Evil that befalls them; Lord, help! If I find Providence smiling upon me, and worldly Wealth increasing, instead of loving God the more for his Goodness, and improving my spare Time for his Glory, and in his Service, I am ready to be too much in Love with these Things, and to grow flat and cold in my Love to God, and in the Performance of his Service; Sweet Jesus, help! On the other Hand saith the Soul, If I want but such Things as I see others enjoy; if I am Poor, and others Rich, instead of being thankful for what I have, and being contented in my present State; instead of believing all Things shall work together for Good, and that God will never leave me, nor forsake me, I am ready at once to envy others, and to have such Thoughts of God as I ought not to have; Son of *David*, help! If God lay but his heavy Hand upon me in some Affliction, as Pain, or Sicknes, tho' in Love to my Soul, yet instead of being patient

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under his Rod, as knowing he hath afflicted me less than my Iniquities have deserved, I am like a Heifer unaccustomed to the Yoak, and ready to faint when tried; Lord, help! If I excel but others in Grace or Parts, tho' I have nothing but what I have received, yet instead of being thankful to that God that made me to differ, I am ready to disdain others, and to have high-swelling Thoughts of my self; Sweet Jesus, help! If I go to an Ordinance, and there hear a Sermon Powerfully Preached, enough to break a Heart of Stone, yet I sometimes come away cold and dead, and forget almost all within a few Hours, and remain an unprofitable Hearer; Lord, help! If worldly Concerns crowd in, I am ready to omit some Duties, or to be hasty in the Performance of them, and to make the greater Concerns, give way to the lesser; Lord, help! If I see (saith the Soul) a dark Cloud gathering over the Church, and that I am like to be called to a suffering Condition, I am ready through Unbelief to be at my Wit's End, for fear I should never hold out; Son of *David*, help! And yet after all these Cries for Help, the poor Soul is overtaken by Sin: But will Christ cast off such a Soul? No, surely; for tho' such Pleas would avail nothing under the Law, yet much under the Gospel, which takes Notice of what is good, but overlooks what is evil. But so much by Way of Trial.

2. Use shall be by Way of Reproof to several Sorts of Persons.

1. If Christ is such a Glorious and Excellent Person as you have heard he is, this then reproves such as are unconcerned about him, who neither regard his Excellencies nor their own Necessities,

but make light of him, and slight those Means which God hath appointed, and in which he is wont to reveal him unto the Soul. One would think that every Soul which hath but heard of what is in Christ, and hath believed the Report, should be restless till they could see themselves interested in him, till they could find Christ in them the Hope of Glory, and that they should never give Sleep to their Eyes, nor Slumber to their Eyelids (v), till they could say, This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend. One would think that wheresoever the Gospel is Preached there should be flocking from every Quarter (u), like Doves to the Windows (w); and that every Family should come with their Young and with their Old, and not One Hoof left behind; and that no Business should be a Hindrance from this great Concern. One would think this should put every Christless Soul upon wrestling with God, with Tears and Supplication for an Interest in him: But alas! alas! we find the contrary. How many are there in the World Strangers to Christ, and yet no more concerned about him than if there was no Beauty or Excellency in him? They scarce think it worth the while to go a Mile or Two to hear a Sermon; no, nor perhaps to go out of their Door to wait upon him: They care not for hearing his Voice, or that he should hear theirs, but think themselves best when furthest from him, and them the only Fools that spend so much Time in enquiring after him: But sure such are worthy of a severe Reproof who thus trample this Sweet Rose of *S Sharon* under Foot; who no more regard him than if he

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(v) *Pf.* 132. 2, 3, 4, 5. (u) *Mark* 1. 45. (w) *Isa.* 60. 8.

was the very Filth and Off-scouring of all Things. Sure Christ deserves better Behaviour from them. How will the Queen of the *South* rise up against such and condemn them, who came from the utmost Parts of the Earth to hear the Wisdom of *Solomon*, while those refuse to come out of their Doors to hear of One far Greater and Wiser than he? *Matt.* 12. 42.

2. It reproves such as are more concerned and taken up about other Things than about Christ. If Men were as careless about other Things as they are about Christ, this would not excuse their Neglect of him; but to be so diligent in other Matters, and mean while neglect him, must needs be an Aggravation of their Crime. As there is a Transcendent Excellency to be found in Christ, which is not to be found in any Thing beside him, so God requires that it should be our greatest Concern to make sure of an Interest in him; and that we should first seek the Kingdom of God, and the Righteousness thereof (x). But alas, how few such are there? How many are like those that were so taken up about their Wives, Farms, and Merchandize, that they had no time, or rather no Heart, to come to the Great Supper? O! how many have their Hands, Heads, and Hearts, taken up about the World? They toil and labour to grow Rich; how do they rise early, and sit up late, and eat the Bread of Carefulness, and all to gain uncertain Riches which make themselves Wings, and fly away, and in the mean time neglect the Pearl of great Prize. If they thrive in the World, O how merry! if they decay in the World, how dejected! and yet unconcerned

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(x) *Matt.* 6. 33.

concerned about the State of their Souls. If they have but any Distemper of Body, O how they run to Physicians; but care not for coming to Christ, the great Physician, for to cure their diseased Souls. And thus other Things are more regarded than Christ. But Oh! what egregious Folly and Madnes is this to be cumbered thus about many Things, and to neglect one Thing more necessary than all these (y)? Thus to labour for the Meat that perishes, and to neglect that which endureth to Eternal Life (z)? This is as if a Man having his House on Fire, in which there was One Jewel of great Prize, should neglect that, and spend all his time in getting out the Lumber till the Jewel was lost. Surely such as these do highly undervalue Christ, while they can find time to mind every thing but Christ: As if Houses and Land, Silver and Gold, were of more Worth than he. That which a Man is most concerned about, any one will suppose is of the highest Esteem to that Person; for common Prudence will direct a Man to take most Care of that which he judges most Valuable. And should we judge so in this Case, what Contempt do such cast on Christ who prefer these low and mean Things before him; as if these perishing Enjoyments had a greater Excellency in them, than is in him; while Christ stands by neglected, and these are so eagerly pursued. And more especially if we consider that Christ may in a Sense be had upon easier Terms than the World. The World often flees so fast from them that do most eagerly pursue it, that they can never, while they live, overtake it; while mean time Christ stands at the

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(y) *Luke* 10. 41, 42. (z) *John* 6. 27.



Door and knocks (a). Christ may be had for putting out the Hand of Faith, without Money or Price; yea, Sinners are earnestly wooed and beseeched (b) to embrace him: And therefore to prefer these things before Christ, when he may be had upon such Terms, is a high Contempt cast upon him; and that for which they are worthy of a severe Reproof, especially if to what hath been spoken, I add the uncertainty of those Enjoyments which they prefer before him: When they have gained them with the greatest Diligence, they are not sure of their continuance one Day. We Read of that Rich Man that had so much he knew not where to bestow his Goods, unless he pluck'd down his Barns, and built greater; but behold! While he is purposing to pluck them down, God plucks him down; and that which he thought would have sufficed for many Years, cannot be enjoyed by him one Day. So, saith Christ, *is he that layeth up Treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God,* Luke 12. 21. But now they that are once interested in Christ, shall always be so; they have chosen that good Part which shall never be taken from them. As this sweet Rose of *Sharon* withereth not, so neither will he ever fail or forsake them that trust in him: And yet for these corruptible things to be Regarded and Esteemed more than he, is high Contempt of him.

3. It reproves such as will not part with a Lust for him; like those *Gaderens*, who preferred their filthy Swine more (c) than Christ. Such as these have a greater respect for the Devil than for him. If they are so worthy to be reproved, who

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(a) *Rev.* 3. 20. (b) *2 Cor.* 5. 20. (c) *Matt.* 8. 32. 33. 34.

who prefer things in themselves lawful more than Christ, how much more they who prefer the greatest Evil rather than him. The more Vile and Contemptible that is which any do Esteem more than Christ, the greater is the Contempt such cast upon him. Now what is viler than Sin? What worse than the Devil? There is not so much spoken in Scripture to set forth the Glory and Excellency of Christ, but there is as much spoken to set forth the Vileness and Odiousness of Sin; and yet many have a greater Love for Sin than for Christ. One will not leave his Drunkenness, another will not leave his Swearing, and Uncleanness, tho' they are separated for those things from Christ for ever. If Christ will save them in their Sins he may, but if they cannot have Christ but they must part with their Sins for him, then farewell Christ; like the *Jews*, who desired that Christ might be Crucified, rather than that Robber *Barrabas* (d). If the Devil doth but call, they run, and are his Humble Servants; if he saith, do this wickedness, they do it; if he stirs them up to do that which will ruin their Estates, impair their Health, and blast their Reputation, and without infinite Mercy bring them to Eternal Woe and Misery. yet they will readily obey him, tho' they Die for it. But if Christ command, or intreats them to forsake Sin, they will not do it, unless he puts forth a mighty Power to cause them so to do. But what will such Wretches say in the Day of Account? What paleness of Face, what trembling of Joints, will seize

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(d) *John* 18. 40.

feize such, when it is proved against them that they have had more Love for Sin, and Satan, than for Christ? Reader, is not this thy Case? Art not thou the Man I am speaking to? Doth not thy Conscience reprove thee in this Matter? Art thou not like that wicked *Herod*, who preferred a wanton Dance before the Head of *John Baptist* (e)? Dost thou not hug some *Dabbah* in thy Bosom, while Christ stands at thy Door and knocks? Dost thou not find more delight in committing Sin, than thou dost in Christ? If thou dost, take shame to thy self for calling Contempt in so high a Manner upon this Glorious Person, and see that you Honour him more for the time to come, lest everlasting Shame and Confusion do at last cover thee.

4. It Reproves such as do set themselves directly to oppose him, and who do seek the Ruin of his Interest here in the World. One would think; considering what an excellent Person he is, that the World should not produce such a Monster; but with Lamentation be it spoken, there are many such, and that even where Christ is Preached; who not only make light of him, and prefer other things before him, but do all they can to oppose him. Like those Husbandmen we Read of, who when they saw the Son, not only refused to give him of the Fruit of the Vineyard, but said, let us Kill him. To this purpose the Psalmist speaks, *Psal. 2. 2, 3. The Kings of the Earth set themselves, and the Rulers take Counsel together against the Lord, and against his Anointed, &c.* There are Two Ways whereby Sinners may be said in a special manner

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(e) *Matt. 14. 6. 10.*

manner to oppose Christ; (1.) By a wilful transgressing of his Law. Christ matters not Compliments, he is a King, and expects to be obeyed; nor will he own any as his Friends, but such as do obey him. And as for any to violate a Law Signed by a Prince, is to oppose the Prince; so to Act wilfully contrary to Christ's Law, is to oppose him, and to do all we can to dethrone him. And yet how many such are there, who not only for want of love to Christ, prefer Sin before him, but Sin out of Spight and Opposition to him? Who love Sin because he hates it; and commit it because he forbids it. As 'tis said, *Luke 19. 14. But his Citizens hated him, and sent a Message after him, saying, we will not have this Man Reign over us.* Thus Sinners not only disobey Christ, but also hate him; and their hatred is the Cause of their Disobedience. (2.) Such do oppose Christ, as do oppose the People of Christ; such as are the Persecutors, and the mocking *Ishmaels* of our Age, who not only resolve to be as Wicked as they can themselves, but Mock and Scoff at such as will not *run to the same excess of Riot, speaking Evil of them,* 1 Pet. 4. 4. These are not only Enemies to this King himself, but to all his Friends; and would not have him have one Loyal Subject in the World if they could help it. How hard a Matter is it for a faithful Servant of Christ to pass the Streets without being Derided? But let such know they do herein oppose Christ; and 'tis for his Sake they meet with such opposition from the World: What is done against the Saints in this Nature, Christ takes as done to himself, *Acts 9. 4. Saul, Saul, why Persecutest thou me?* A parallel Text,  
*Luke*

Or, *The Glory of Christ unvail'd.* 153

*Luke 10. 16. He that Despisetb you, Despisetb me.* And sure such as these are worthy of severe Reproof from the Doctrine I am upon. And tho' God may suffer these things for a while, yet he himself will at last reprove for those Sins, and will set them in Order before such as are Guilty hereof, and will make them know, tho' Hand join'd in Hand, they shall not go unpunished. Such as set themselves thus against the Lord, and against his Anointed, may Read their Doom, *Psal. 2. 9. Thou shalt break them with a Rod of Iron, thou shalt dash them in pieces like a Potter's Vessel.* And O! With what Weight will that Iron Rod fall? How strong will the Bonds be that one Day will bind these Mockers (f)? Christ will surely vindicate his own People, in the utter Ruin and Destruction of such as have been their Persecuters, except they Repent. Never any thus hardened themselves against him, and his People, and prospered. He will make his Enemies know, that he which toucheth his People, toucheth the Apple of his Eye (g). 'Tis pleasant to consider how God hath Espoused his Peoples Quarrels, and even in this Life hath singled out such as have Persecuted or Reproached them. When even those little Children Reproached the Prophet, what a Judgment besel them? *2 Kings 2. 23, 24.* Let this be a warning to Children.

Thus you Read of that proud Enemy *Pharaoh*, who oppressed the People of God, and laid heavy Burdens on them; but what got this Wretch in the end? God Conquers him by contemptible Flies

Flies and Frogs, and at last Drowns him and his Host in the Red Sea, when he thought himself sure of his Prey. What got those Accusers of *Daniel*? *Dan.* 6. 24. We Read also, how that wicked *Belshazzar*, who was drinking Wine out of the Vessels that were wont to serve at God's Altar, while no doubt the People of God were Mourning to see those Sacred Vessels put to such a prophane use, and to see the House of God plundered: But observe, the same Hour he sees a Hand-writing on the Wall, which makes him stand Trembling, and his Joints smite one against another, and that Night was he Slain, *Dan.* 5. Thus God is wont to deal with his Peoples Enemies in the time of his Anger. One Instance more we have, *Acts* 12. at large; you Read in the beginning how *Herod* had killed *James*, and proceeded to take *Peter*, as if he had said, I'll warrant you I'll clear the World of 'em by degrees: But observe, when he was in the highest of his Glory, the Angel of the Lord smote him: As if he had said, Take that for Imprisoning my Dear Servant *Peter*, and for Killing my Servant *James*. And it is observable, that whereas others usually give up the Ghost first, and then are eaten of the Worms, he first is eaten of Worms, and then gives up the Ghost, that others might Hear and Tremble to do as he had done. And such as will not take warning by those things, let them beware lest God take them away with his Stroke, for *he ordaineth his Arrows against the Persecutors*, *Psal.* 7. 12, 13. Christ will oppose them that oppose him and his Interest; he must Reign till all his Enemies are made his Footstool: And if such as only neglect Christ shall not go unpunished, what will

will become of them that thus spit as it were in his Beautiful Face? Sure such will sink even into the very Lowest Place of the Bottomless Pit.

The Third Use shall be to draw some Inferences from the Doctrine.

*First Inference.* Is Christ such an Excellent and Glorious Person as you have heard? Then how unspeakably, yea, unconceivably great is the Love of the Father in bestowing such a Person, and in such a Way and Manner, upon such unworthy Creatures as we are? For look as among Men, the greater the Kindness is, and the more valuable the Gift which any bestows, the greater we suppose his Love to us to be who bestowed it upon us; and if this Rule may hold good, then in this the Love of the Father doth exceedingly appear; yea, more than if he had given to any of us the whole World. As there is nothing in this lower World comparable to Christ, so the Love of the Father doth in nothing so discover itself as in giving Christ to us; here he opens his most tender Bowels towards us. And therefore, tho' I have hitherto been speaking of the Excellency of the Son, yet now I must speak a little of the Father's Boundless Love in sending him into the World; and in a more especial manner, in giving him to any of us in a saving manner. It was the Father that laid Help upon this Mighty One; the Father chose him, *Isa. 42. 1.* the Father sent him; and O! what Love is this, to send the Son of his Dear Love that lay in his Bosom? *John 3. 16.* *God so loved the World, that he gave his only Begotten Son, &c.* So, how? Nay, he makes no Comparison, because none could be found, but leaves it to

us to judge. Christ did not come to procure his Father's Love to his Elect by his Sufferings; no, it was the Father's Love to them that was the Cause of his coming, and not his coming the Cause of the Father's loving: If the Father had not loved us, the Son had not died for us: He came to fulfil his Father's Will, and to redeem those whom the Father in tender Love had given unto him before the World began. The Father's Love is the Spring of all our Happiness; and O how stupendious is it! How soon may we be lost in our Meditations of it! What, will God bestow this Rose of *Sharon*, the Sweetest Flower in the Heavenly Paradise, upon any of us? Sure *Abraham's* offering up *Isaac* was never such a Token of his Fear, as this is of God's Love to us. 1 John 4. 9, 10. *In this is manifested the Love of God towards us, because that God sent his only Begotten Son into the World, that we might live through him. Herein is Love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the Propitiation for our Sins.* And that God should bestow him freely too. If he had not thus bestowed him on us as a Free Gift, we must have been for ever miserable; we could never have purchased this Pearl of great Price with our small Stores. And yet more especially if we consider on whom he bestows this Gift. If a King hath an only Son that is Rich, Wise, Beautiful, and Gracious, he can scarce find one in the World that he thinks good enough to match his Son unto: But tho' there is that Excellency to be found in Christ which is not to be found in any Creature in the World, yet God gives him to such as were Rebels and Traitors. God saw all the Race <sup>of man</sup> sinking into Hell, as the just Reward of their  
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their Sin and Wickedness, and then sent his Son as a Ransom to deliver us from going down into the Pit. He saw what Man would do; he well knew how Vile he would make himself; and yet all this could not prevent him sending of his Son. And O! what a wretched State doth he find the Soul in, when he gives Christ to it? We are so far from having any thing in us to move God to bestow him upon us, that there is that in us that might justly provoke him to abhor us. O! let us admire this Love, that God should be in Christ reconciling the World unto himself; this can proceed from nothing but pure Grace and Love. It could be no pleasant Thing to the Father (to consider the Thing in it self) to see his Dear and Only Son despised and rejected of Men; to see the Objects gathering themselves together, and spurning Dirt, as it were, on his Beautiful Face, till his Visage was more marred than any of the Sons of Men; nor to see him mocked and derided in his greatest Sufferings on the Cross. Much less can we suppose it delightful to the Father (considered simply in it self) to wound and bruise him with his own Hand, till Clods of Blood run down to the Ground; no surely, he was his Dearly Beloved Son, even then when he hid his Face from him. But such was his Love unto poor lost and perishing Man, that he would make his Son, this Glorious and Excellent Person you have heard so much of, to be miserable for a while, rather than we should be miserable to Eternity: He would rather his Son should shed his most Precious Blood, than we should for ever lye weltering in ours. O! how great was his Love in striking his Dear Son rather than us; he seems, as it were, to an Eye of Reason to have a greater

Love for us than for him, while he must die that we might live; he must be wounded, that by his Stripes we might be healed. Such was the Father's Love, that for our Sakes *it pleased him to bruise his Son*, Isa. 53. 10. O Boundless Love! O Bottomless Ocean! That God should give his Son, his own Son, his only Son, his dearly beloved Son, his dutiful Son, and that was so Incomparably Excellent and Glorious, and that to such unworthy Dust and Ashes as we are.

*Second Inference.* Is Christ such an Excellent Person as you have heard? Then how great is his condescending Love to do what he hath done for such as we are? I have hinted somewhat of the Father's Love, but we cannot speak too distinctly of those weighty Concerns: Considering the vast Distance between us and him, it may make us admire that he should take any Notice of us, or concern himself about us. We see among Men how scornfully the great Men look upon the meaner Sort; and if they give them any thing, they usually send it by the Hands of some Servant. What little Notice did *Dives* take of *Lazarus*? His Dogs shewed more Pity than he (*b*); they lick'd his Sores; and yet the Difference between the Richest Prince that sitteth upon the Throne, and the Poorest Beggar upon the Dunghil, is not the Thousandth Part so great as it is between Christ and the highest Prince. In the former the Difference is but between Finite and Finite, between Creature and Creature, both Clay, only one a little more refined than the other; but in the latter the Difference is between the Creator and Creature, between which no Comparison can be

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(b) *Luke* 16. 21.

be made; and yet notwithstanding the Difference between the Creatures is far less. What great Condescension would it be thought for a King to Marry a Beggar in Rags? Yet this, and all the Similitudes we can use, will come far short in setting forth the Condescension of Christ towards us, in doing what he hath done for us. What could Christ promise to himself as to meet Reward for his Kindness to us? If one great Man doth any thing for another, he may hope for some Amends; but what could Christ promise to himself from such Contemprible Creatures as we are? And since he was never like to receive any Reward from us, it was Infinite Love and Condescension to take any Notice of us; and the more he hath done for us, the more is his Condescension to be admired by us. And sure I am, as the Distance is great between us, so his Kindness is as great which he extends towards us. He laid down his Life for his Sheep; and what could he do more? Was it ever known, think you, that a King should die for his meanest Subject? Yet *when we were without Strength, in due time Christ died for us* (i). It is not without good Cause that the Prophet so oft repeats that little Word OUR in *Isa. 53. 4, 5.* 'Tis but a little Word, but it contains a great Wonder in it; for tho' it seems strange that such a Glorious Person should ever sip at such a bitter Cup, I mean, that he should be expos'd to the least Suffering; but more strange that he should suffer such great Things; but most strange to consider for whom he suffered. Sure this is the good *Samaritan* to cure those Wounds we had received by rebelling against

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(i) *Rom. 5. 6.*

him. O Stupendious Consideration! that ever our Sins should be done away by the Blood of him that was the Mighty God; and as if to suffer so much from Men, and to die, had not been a sufficient Demonstration of his Condescension and Love to us, he goes yet lower, and engages to be a Surety for us, and bears the Wrath of God due for the Sins of the Elect. What, stand in the Room of Sinners! This is the greatest Wonder we have yet seen. It is wonderful to think what he suffered; more wonderful to think for whom; but most wonderful to think of the true Cause of his Sufferings. 2 Cor. 5. 21. *For he hath made him to be Sin for us, who knew no Sin, &c.* He was look'd upon really to be a Sinner by Men, and really dealt with as if he had been such by God himself. Isa. 53. 6 *And the Lord hath laid on him the Iniquity of us all.* We see sometimes great Men, if good, are ashamed to appear to plead for the Lives of their Children when they have committed some scandalous Fault, or notorious Villany: And no Wonder then if this Glorious Person had disdained to have been numbered with Transgressors, or to die a Sacrifice for Sin; the Just for the Unjust, to bring us to God. Nor do we yet see the utmost of his Condescension and Love, till we consider the Nearness he takes his People in to himself; he looks not upon himself as compleat, mystically considered, as separate from his Elect, or any one of them, notwithstanding his Glorious Excellency. Hence the Church is said to be *the Fulness of him that filleth all in all*, Eph. 1. 23. That Christ should be our Fulness is not so strange, because it hath pleased the Father that in him should all Fulness dwell; but that we that are so poor and empty, should

should be the fulness of him, is Matter of admiration indeed; only let us beware of understanding it, as if we were his fulness in the same sense he is ours, for such Thoughts would be Blasphemous: He fills us as we are empty, poor, and indigent Creatures, but thus we are not his fulness: But such is the nearness the Saints stand in to Christ, and the dear Love he bears to them, that he looks upon himself as Maimed, mystically considered, if any one of his Members should be wanting. This Glorious Person seems to Glory in his Spouse, as if he had got some advantageous Match (k). Well might the Apostle say, the Love of Christ passeth Knowledge, since all he hath done for us, and bestowed upon us, must be resolved into his Love to us. As it was Love in the Father that moved him to send his Son, so it was only Love in the Son that made him overlook that vast distance we were at from him, and make us thus nigh. O! How strong were those Cords of Love with which he drew us out of that horrible Pit (l)? And how low did this High and Mighty One stoop to reach us, and to fasten them unto us, when our Feet were sinking into the Miry Clay, even in that Pit where there was no Water? Was it a thing possible, it would make us think that at once he had forgotten his own Glory and Excellency, and our Poverty and Ignominy. O amazing Sight! To see as it were Dirt thrown in his Beautiful Face, that such deformed Creatures as we might be made comely. To see him that was the Son of the most High God lye grovelling in the

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(k) *Rev.* 21. 9. (l) *Psal.* 40. 2.

Dust, that we poor Contemptible Creatures might lift up our Heads with Joy. To see him who was the express Image of his Father's Person, and that laid in his Bosom, come to lye in a Manger; that we who lay gasping for Life, and weltering in our Blood, might at last come to lye in *Abraham's* Bosom. To see him that was wont to wear the Crown Royal of Heaven, now wearing a shameful Crown of Thorns; that such as we, who had debased our selves even unto Hell, might wear a Crown of an exceeding weight of Glory. To see him that was the Prince of Glory, and King of the Kings of the Earth, as it were for a while stripping of himself of his Robes of Glory, that we who had no better covering than filthy Rags, might have change of Raiment given us. To see him who was Life it self die, that we who had long laid rotting in the Grave of Sin might have Life; and might have it more abundantly. O whither hath this condescending Love carried him! We cannot well conceive, how he that was so high could be made lower, nor how we that were so low could be made higher. O the vast Mountains and Hills that lay between us and Christ! And yet Love brought him over all, and that with the greatest Delight. *Cant. 2. 8. The Voice of my Beloved, behold he cometh leaping upon the Mountains, skipping upon the Hills:* Those Mountains could not keep Christ from us. So that now it may be said of the Saints, as in *Eph. 2. 13. But now in Christ Jesus, ye that were sometime afar off, are now made nigh by the Blood of Christ.* The Heavens are not higher above the Earth, than Christ is above us; nor is the East farther from the West, than we are naturally

naturally from Christ, yet now made nigh: Now in him, now Heirs, and Joint-heirs with him; now Flesh of his Flesh, and Bone of his Bone; we were not so far off before, but now by Grace we are as nigh. We are now no more Strangers, but of the Family and Household of God (*m*). We that once were feeding on Husks, have now through Christ a Right to the Childrens Bread. But O! Where is the Man that can dive to the bottom of this Ocean, and tell us the depth of those Mysteries? The Consideration of Christ's Condescension to us, and that near Relation we stand in to him, will be one of Heavens Wonders to all Eternity, *Rev. 21. 9. I will show thee the Bride, the Lamb's Wife.* As if he had said, Behold a Wonder indeed! Those Glorious Creatures with shining Crowns on their Heads were once Poor and Miserable: They that are now Feasting with their Lord, were once lying under the Hedges, and in the Highways: They that now are all in White, were once as Black as now they are White: They that now are Singing, were once Sorrowful, and this is the Lamb's Wife.

*Third Inference.* Is Christ such a Glorious Person? How provoking must it be to God when we refuse to believe in him, and so put the greatest slight upon him? This was one great End of God's sending Christ into the World, that we should believe in him, and that by believing we might have Life through his Name: And it must needs be provoking to God, that when he hath so discovered his Love, as to send this Glorious and Excellent Person on this kind Errand, he should be slighted, and his Message disregarded. Look  
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as among Men, for any to put a slight upon a Prince, is more heinous than to put a slight upon a common Subject, and especially when the Prince is loving and kind. And may we judge of the greatness of the Sin of Unbelief, by the Dignity of the Person whom we slight, and offend hereby, we must needs look upon this Sin to be exceeding and above measure sinful: For we had better put a slight upon all the Kings of the Earth, than slight Christ, forasmuch as he is far above them all; they being but Subjects at best unto this Supream King. And yet I fear this Sin is but little regarded, or laid to Heart by many; they think if they do not Swear, Steal, or commit Adultery, or some gross and scandalous Wickedness, and especially if they live Honestly, and Wrong no Man, and keep to their Church, or Meeting, then all must needs be well; as for the Evil of Unbelief they see nothing of that, nor are they concerned about it. But whatever low or light Thoughts such may have of this Sin, who know not the Excellency of him whom they reject, yet God knows his Son's Excellencies, and therefore will not hold such guiltless; nor will he so lightly pass by this Sin as some may suppose. And know this, whoever thou art that readeest, if this Charge be brought in against thee at the great Day, it will be in vain to plead, God, I thank thee I am not as other Men; I am no Swearer, no Adulterer, &c. this Indictment alone will be just cause of thy Condemnation. O, when the Spirit of God comes to discover this Sin unto a Soul, how great doth it appear! *John 16. 9. He will reprove the World of Sin, v. 8, and v. 9. because ye believe not in me:* It may be read Con-

vince,



vince, and it signifies such a Conviction as when a Man's Mouth is stopped, and he hath nothing to answer for himself: And yet here is no Sin mentioned but Unbelief; this will be looked upon as a heavy Charge in the sight of God; God hath in his Word testified his sore Displeasure against such as are guilty of this Sin, as we may gather from *Matt.* 21. 33, to 41. which you may read at leisure; and observe, God forbears those wicked Husbandmen, while one of his Servants is Stoned, another Killed; at last he sends his Son, and knowing him to be such an Honourable and Excellent Person, concludes (as well he might) they will Reverence my Son; but when they had Slain him, he can bear no longer, but falls upon them, and miserably destroys those Husbandmen. A Parallel Text you have *Luke* 14. 16, to 22. Mind, among those Guests that refused to come, here were no Swearers, nor Drunkards, nor Sabbath-breakers, that we know of, but good Honest Industrious Men, as the World judge: Nor were they any of the Clowns of that Age, but Well-bred Persons, who gave a very courteous Answer. We pray thee have us excused? As if they had said, We take the Invitation kindly at your Master's Hand, and doubt not but the Entertainment is Sumptuous, but it is a busie time with us; we have Farms and Merchandize which must not be neglected, and therefore we pray thee have us excused. And yet you see their Fair answer could not excuse them; the Master resolves that not one of them that were bidden should taste of his Supper. He sends to such as were in the Highways, and under the Hedges, and invites them to come: It seems he was better pleased

pleased with Beggars, and such Sort, who came to the Feast, than the rich Farmers and Merchants that made light of it. God in much Mercy hath fixed on this Way to save Sinners, that by believing we might have Life, but with a Resolve, that such as believe not shall not see Life. Yea, he hath given his Oath that such shall not enter into Heaven, *Heb. 2. 18.* Against whom Sware he that they should not enter into his Rest, but against them that believe not? Nor will he only exclude such from Heaven, but to show his Abhorrence of their Sin, will certainly send such to Hell, *Mark 16. 16.* *He that believeth not, shall be Damned.* Any he, let him be who he will, or what he will, if he dies an Unbeliever, he's gone. So *Heb. 2. 3.* *How shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation?* Which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord. It implies, there can be no Way found out for the escape of such; they are out of the Way of Salvation, and in the broad Way to Hell and Destruction, that believe not in Christ; nor shall such escape with an ordinary Punishment. Great Crimes have severe Punishments among Men; so God will not only surely punish, but also severely punish, such as are at the great Day found guilty of this Sin: A lively Emblem we have of this in the *Jews*; these were they of whom it is said, he came unto his own, and his own received him not; these were they that made light of him, to whom he was a Stone of Stumbling: It was once said, Salvation was of the *Jews*; they had Christ first Preached to them, but they Despised him, Crucified him, and preferred a Thief before him; they wished his Blood might be on them and their Children:

dren: And how close hath the Judgment of God pursued them ever since? What a Miserable People are they? They are at once stripped of their former Priviledges, and are exposed to Shame and Contempt: They which once were looked upon as the Glory of all Nations, are now a People Robbed and Spoiled, and rightly termed Desolate and Forsaken. And all this is happened to them as the just Reward of their Unbelief, and because they knew not the Time of their Visitation. And yet all these Things are tolerable, if compared to what will befall them, and all others that die in Unbelief, in another World. Let me clear One awakening Text to you to this Purpose, *Heb. 10. 26, 27, to 30.* *For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the Knowledge of the Truth, there remaineth no more Sacrifice for Sins, but a certain fearful looking for of Judgment, and fiery Indignation, which shall devour the Adversaries: He that despised Moses's Law died without Mercy, under Two or Three Witnesses; of how much sorer Punishment suppose ye shall he be thought worthy who hath troden under Foot the Son of God? &c.* By sinning wilfully Interpreters do generally understand rejecting of Christ; and it must needs be so, because they are said to tread his Blood under Foot, *i. e.* despise it, and look upon it as useles and contemptible. And observe, 'tis said there remains no more Sacrifice for Sins; that is, when Christ, the Great and Only Sacrifice, is refused, Prayers and Tears will avail nothing in this Case. And here is a certain and fearful looking for of fiery Indignation, &c. Which Words, one would think, should make every Rejecter of Christ to tremble. Observe, here is Indignation; and lest that

that should not be enough, here is fiery Indignation, or the Wrath of God blown up into a Flame against such, and that renders it fearful; for who can stand when he is angry? 'Tis a fearful Thing to fall into the Hands of the Living God: But lest any should think to escape, there is one Heart-sinking Word added, and that is, *Certain*, which makes it the more fearful; and lest any should think they are able to grapple with it, it is added, *which shall devour the Adversaries*. Thus you see how God declares his Abhorrence of this Sin by the Severity of the Punishment he inflicts on such as are guilty of it; nor have any just Cause to find Fault with him, or accuse him of Injustice for so doing. Suppose a King having some poor Creatures condemned for conspiring his own Death, should send his only Son, and should assure them under his Broad Seal, that if they would but cease from their former wicked Practice, he would spare their Lives, and take them into his Favour: But to come yet nearer to the Point in Hand, suppose his Son offers to die for them, and yet after all they should spurn Dirt in his Son's Face, and should tell him they like neither him nor his Message; nay, suppose they lay violent Hands on him, and kill him, could any Man justly blame that King if he speedily and miserably destroyed those Murderers? No sure. No more Cause have we to find Fault with God, or to charge him with Injustice, in executing such severe Punishment upon Unbelievers, since Unbelief is Interpretively no less than a Crucifying of Christ. Heb. 6. 6. *Seeing they Crucifie to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to open Shame.* They do so, as much as in them lyeth. As the *Jews* shewed their Contempt

tempt of Christ by Crucifying him, so these by rejecting him now Crucified. And for any to Crucifie Christ under our Gospel Light, must needs be a more aggravated Offence than that of the *Jews* in Crucifying him at *Jerusalem*; for they did it ignorantly; the Doctrine of Christ had not gained much Credit than in the World; he was judged to be an Impostor, and a Deceiver by some, and especially by them that Crucified him, till it was too late to recal what they had done. That this was done through Ignorance in them is clear from *1 Cor. 2. 8.* *Which none of the Princes of this World knew; for had they known it they would not have Crucified the Lord of Glory.* And you read in the Second of the *Acts*, that when Peter had convinced them that the same Jesus whom they had Crucified was Lord and Christ, they were pricked to the Heart; and when he had exhorted them to Repent, and to be Baptized in the Name of Christ, 'tis said *they gladly received his Word*: But now what can you say who Crucifie the Lord afresh? You own him to be the Son of God, and yet Crucifie him. Ah, how many are there that in Word condemn the Practice of the *Jews*, and are ready to say, Away with them from the Earth, 'tis not fit they should live, who own God to be just in his Judgments upon them and their Children for their Sakes, and yet are guilty of as bad a Sin themselves, yea, far worse, and yet not concerned about it? They blame the *Jews*, but not themselves, who, like those Hypocrites, garnish the Sepulchres of the Martyr'd Prophets, and yet say, If they had lived in their Day they would not have been Partakers with them in their Bloody Deeds, *Matt. 23. 29,*

30. Hypocrites indeed; and believe 'em that will. We may say to these as Christ to them, *Vers. 31. Wherefore ye be Witnesses now your selves that ye are the Children of them that killed the Prophets.* You think you may do as *Pilate*, who took Water and washed his Hands, saying, *I am free from the Blood of this Just Man; see ye to that (n)*, and then goes and condemns him, and delivered him to be Crucified. That Wretch knows now it was not his washing his Hands in Water could free him from the Guilt of that Sin; if his Heart had been as clean as his Hands, why did he deliver him to them? If he thought as he said, that he was a Just Man, how dare he that was a Judge act so unjustly, as first himself to Scourge him, and then to deliver him to be Crucified? 'Tis evident, when he pronounced him Just, he rather spoke his Wife's Opinion than his own, *Vers. 19.* but when he Scourged him, and Crucified him, he acted like himself: So when Sinners do call him Lord and Christ, they have learned this from that common Report of the World; but when they refuse to believe in him, and so Crucifie him, then they shew what Esteem they have for him. Many do not openly deny Christ to be the Son of God, for the same Reason that the Pharisees did not deny the Baptism of *John* to be from Heaven, because they feared the People; for all held *John* as a Prophet. But if such do really think Christ is from Heaven, why do they not believe in him? We have Reason to think the Sin of the *Indians* is far less, who openly deny Christ, than theirs is, who own him in Word to be both Lord and Christ,

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(n) *Matt. 27. 24, 26.*

Christ, and yet refuse to believe in him. Saith Christ, *And why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the Things which I say?* Openly to own Christ, and yet to refuse to believe in him, is *Judas* like, to betray the Son of Man with a Kiss. Saith Christ, Luke 22. 48. *Betrayest thou the Son of Man with a Kiss?* As if he had said, Art thou such a Wretch to betray me while thou pretendest Kindness to me? As if he had said, I take it better of thy Companions to see them come with Swords and Staves, than of thee to betray me with a Kiss. Little do Unbelievers think what they do in rejecting of Christ; alas, when we have set forth how evil an Heart of Unbelief is, but few believe it to be so; or if they do, yet do not think themselves guilty of it, but are ready to say in this Case as he in another, *Is thy Servant a Dog that he should do this?* And yet did it, 2 Kings 8. 13. compared with Chap. 10. 32. and Chap. 13. 7. They are oft ready to say as *David* to *Nathan*, *The Man that hath done this thing shall surely die*; when it may be truly answered to them as *Nathan* to *David*, *Thou art the Man*. And O that what I have spoken might have the same Influence on you that *Nathan's* Words had on *David*! They rouzed him from that sleepy Condition in which he had so long laid, and made him cry out, *I have sinned*. And sure I am, if you are not convinced of this Sin in this World, you will be in the World to come. But O how dreadful to be convinced of this Sin when there will be no Help to be had. If you are by the Spirit of God convinced of this Sin here, there is Hopes you may be saved from it, and that he that convinced you of Sin may also convince you of Righteousness: And that as they

who had imbru'd their Hands in Christ's Blood were many of them saved by Faith in it, so tho' you may have Crucified the Lord afresh, yet when once you come to be pricked in the Heart as they were, and have Hearts to believe in him as they did, you may assure yourselves from God's Word, this Sin, tho' so great and provoking in God's Sight, shall not be mentioned against you. But as you love you Precious Souls, beware of having light Thoughts of this Sin; for so long there is little Hopes you will repent of it, or turn from it. Thus I have shown you how provoking the Sin of Unbelief is in the Sight of God, and that upon the Account of the Dignity and Excellency of that Christ who is hereby despised; and I have the more enlarged on this Head, not only because the Inference is so natural, but because Men are naturally so hard to believe the Danger this Sin exposes them unto. But however, Men may flatter themselves, and think 'tis enough to make them Christians to be sober, and to pay every Man his own; yet Wo, Wo, to that Man that is found an Unbeliever. This will be as a Stone where-ever it falls, that will grinde to Pieces. Such will open their Mouths, and curse their Day, when they come to stand before the Son of Man.

*Fourth Inference.* Is Christ such an Excellent Person as you have heard? How Honourable are the Saints, yea, the least of them, and even such as sit on the lowest Form? The more Excellent Christ is, the more Honourable are they, and that upon the Account of the Nearness of their Relation to him: They are Members of his Body, *and of his Flesh, and of his Bones,* Eph. 5. 30. 'Tis not without good Cause that the Saints are said



said to be the Excellent of the Earth, *Psal.* 16. 3. For look as in Marriage, if a Woman Marry a Contemptible Person, she must expect to share with him in his Disgrace; but if he be Honourable, she shares with him in that also: So in this Case Christ being so Honourable and Excellent, and the Saints being so near to him, they must needs be Honourable on this Account: The greatest Monarch on Earth, if not in Christ, is not so truly Honourable as the poorest Saint that lyes upon the Dunghil. *Lazarus* was far more Honourable when he lay at the Rich Man's Door, desiring to be fed with the Crumbs that fell from his Table, than the Rich Man was who fared Sumptuously every Day: And so it soon appeared; the latter was only Honourable in the Sight of Men, but the former was so in the Sight of God; and that is the true Honour that cometh from above. Well might the Apostle say, as in *1 Pet.* 2. 7. *To you therefore which believe he is an Honour,* (as it may be read) since they are not only related to him, but nearly related to him. As it is no small Badge of Honour to the Son that he is so nearly related to the most High God, so it is a great Honour to the Saints that they stand so nearly related unto the Son. He is their Elder Brother, *Heb.* 2. 12. *I will declare thy Name unto my Brethren;* yea, they are Married unto Christ; and therefore so long as he is Honourable they cannot be Contemptible. They may indeed be despised by Men, as he was while his Honour was veiled with our Flesh; but as notwithstanding all the Shame and Contempt he underwent he was then truly Honourable, and will appear so at the Great Day, even to his Despisers; so tho' now the Saints are looked upon by

the Carnal World as the Filth and Off-scouring of all Things while they are bearing their Cross, yet they are truly Honourable, and will appear so when they come to wear their Crowns, as the Psalmist speaks, *Psal. 68. 13. Tho' ye have lain among the Pots, yet shall ye be as the Wings of a Dove, covered with Silver, and her Feathers with Yellow Gold.* When Christ, who is the Believer's Life, shall appear, then shall they also appear with him in Glory (o); and tho' their Honour was veiled while they were appearing for him, it will shine bright when they come to appear with him; and their Enemies shall behold it: They do not seem to the World so Contemptible now, but they will appear as Honourable then, when they shall sit with Christ at the Great Assize to Judge the World, *2 Cor. 6. 2.* and when they *shall bind King in Chains, and Nobles in Fetters; this Honour have all the Saints, Ps. 149. 8, 9.* You that are Saints, bear a while the Reproaches of Christ; he will clear your Innocency at that Day; and the more you have been despised for Christ here, the more you will be honoured by Christ then: These Reproaches will be but as so many shining Jewels in your Crown, as so many Stars, while you have been Fighting for Christ, which will be your greatest Honour.

*Fifth Inference.* Is Christ such a Glorious and Excellent Person as you have heard? How worthy is he to be imitated? We find by daily Experience how ready Persons are to imitate Great Men; and the more Noble, the more Honourable, and Wise, any are in the Opinion of the World, the more striving there is to imitate such, even to a Fault. How are the Modes and Fashions of a Court

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(o) *Col. 3. 4.*

Court observed and imitated? How much more is Christ to be followed? This is the fairest Copy we can write after: By imitating others we may sin, tho' they are the greatest of Men, yea, tho' the best of Men. Hence saith the Blessed Apostle, *Be ye Followers of me, as I am of Christ,* 1 Cor. II. 1. But 'tis by not imitating of Christ that we sin; and yet alas, how few do follow Christ, and tread in the Steps of this Forerunner? Most think it a Shame to 'em to be found walking as he walked; they had rather imitate the Devil than Christ. But if we own Christ to be so Excellent, let us take him as our Example; and in all we say or do, let us think thus with our selves, Would Christ so speak, or act, if he was now on Earth? Or hath he left us any such Example? O what a Blessed Time would it be if Christ was but more imitated; there would then be no more such Swearing and Cursing, such Sabbath-breaking, &c. since we read nothing of these in the Life of the Blessed and Holy Jesus: He did no Sin, neither was Guile found in his Mouth (p): There would then be no more such Want of Love, since he hath taught us to love one another (q), and hath given us the greatest Demonstrations of his own Love to us in dying for us: There would then be no more such cheating, defrauding, and going beyond each other, as now is in the World, since he hath taught us to do to others as we would have them do to us (r): There would not then be such immoderate Pursuit after the World as now there is, since he hath taught us, both by his Example and Doctrine, to *seek first the Kingdom of God, and the Righteousness thereof* (s): There would then be no more such Discoveries of

Pride, as now there is among many, in their painted and patched Faces, and immodest Dresses, to the great Scandal of Religion, since we read only of his seamless Coat (t): There would then be no more such Murmuring and Discontent under the afflicting Hand of God, as now there is, while we hear him saying under his greatest Trials, *If this Cup may not pass from me unless I drink it, thy Will be done* (v): There would then be no more Impatience among the People of God under Reproaches and Persecutions from Men, since we read how *he gave his Back to the Smiters, and his Cheeks to them that plucked off the Hair* (u): *He was led as a Lamb to the Slaughter* (w), and when *he was reviled, he reviled not again* (x). He patiently endured the Cross, and despised the Shame, leaving us hereby an Example to tread in his Steps: There would not then be so many Prayerless Persons as now there are, nor yet so much Coldness in the Performance of that Duty, since we read how he in the Days of his Flesh *offered up Prayers and Supplications, with strong Crying and Tears* (y): There would not then be so much Pomp and Vainglory in the Worship of God as is now to be found among many, since he hath taught us that *God is a Spirit, and that they that worship him must worship him in Spirit and Truth* (z). O! What a new World would this be if Christ's Law was more observed, and his Practice more imitated? But alas, it seems to be now with us as it was in *Pharaoh's Dream*, to which I may allude, where you read how *the Ill-favour'd devoured the Fat Kine and Well-favoured*, Gen. 41. 2, 3. So there are so many Ill-favoured

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(s) *Mat. 6. 33.* (t) *John 19. 23.* (v) *Mat. 26. 42.* (u) *Isa 50. 6.*  
 (w) *Isa. 57. 7.* (x) *1 Pet. 2. 22.* (y) *Heb. 5. 7.* (z) *John 4. 24.*

favoured Inventions of Men in our Day, both in Doctrine and Practice, as have almost eaten up and devoured (if I may so say) both the Doctrine and Example of our Lord Jesus Christ. But tho' it is thus, yet Christ is most worthy to be observed and imitated because of his Excellency.

*Sixth Inference.* Is Christ such a Glorious and Excellent Person? Then to be sure he will never let such low and mean Creatures as we are, be any Losers for any Thing we can do or suffer for him: *Our Labour shall not be in vain in the Lord,* tho' it may abound, *1 Cor. 15. 58.* For look as among Men, such as are right Honourable, Rich, and Noble, are not wont to let such as are Poor and Indigent be Losers by them; they are so far from so doing, that usually they reward them far above their Deserts, and usually give according to their Rank; and not so to do would be a Blemish to their Honour. Such as have the Title of Excellency are wont to reward Bountifully. And let me tell you, Christ's Honour lyes at Stake to see that none loses by his Service. Hence 'tis said, *Zech. 9. 12. Turn ye to the strong Hold, ye Prisoners of Hope; even to Day do I declare that I will render double unto thee.* Not only barely so much as they might lose for his Sake, but even double, and that upon the very Day of their returning to him; and lest this should not be thought enough, see *Mark 10. 28, 29, 30. Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee: And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, there is no Man that hath left House, or Brethren, or Sisters, or Father, or Mother, or Wife, or Children, or Lands, for my Sake and the Gospel's, but he shall receive an Hundredfold, now in this Time,*

M 4. Houses,

*Houses, and Brethren, and Sisters, and Mothers, and Children, and Lands, with Persecution ; and in the World to come Eternal Life.* Thus you see how Christ gives unto his faithful Servants *good Measure pressed down, and running over.* You that are the Servants of Christ have much Work to do for him, and it may be something to suffer for him, but hold on sweet Souls, you work for a good Master, you do not serve Christ for Nought: If an Inheritance that fadeth not away, if a Crown of an exceeding Weight of Glory, and a Kingdom that cannot be moved, can recompence your Labour of Love, you shall be no losers for Christ. As he infinitely excels all the World in Honour, Majesty, and Excellency, so he scorns that any should reward us like him. All that the Great Men can give to us, tho' they would exhaust their Store, are but uncertain Riches, and but fading Enjoyments, but Christ gives unto his People Grace and Glory, which is more than the World have to give. The Saints have much in Possession here, but more in Reversion. *Paul*, when he had suffered the loss of all things for Christ, could say, and I do count them but Dung that he might win Christ (a). He knew if he could but win Christ he should be no loser in the end: He knew *those light Afflictions which were but for a Moment, were not worthy to be compared with the Glory that should be revealed* (b). Thus the Apostle took joyfully the spoiling of their Goods, knowing that in Heaven they had better and more induring Substance. This made good *Moses esteem the very Reproaches of Christ greater*

(a) *Phil.* 3. 8. (b) *Rom.* 8. 18. & *Cor.* 4. 17.

ter Riches than the Treasures of Egypt, for he had respect unto the Recompence of Reward, Heb. 11. 26. Christ doth not give all at once to his People, he loves to be trusted; but he is faithful who hath promised, and within a little while he will clear off all Arrears; when he will open his Treasures of Glory, he will then say, Well done good and faithful Servant, enter thou into thy Master's Joy. I may allude to what we Read of *Mordecai*, *Esther* 6. 1, 2, 3, &c. The King caused the Records to be Read, and there it was found what good Service he had formerly done the King; but when the King enquired what Honour and Dignity had been done to him for it; the Servants answered, nothing had been done for him. Nay, notwithstanding this good Service, there was by some a Gallows prepared to Hang him. But the King, to requite his good Service, orders him to be Cloathed with his own Royal Apparel and to Ride on his own Horse, and *Haman* his implacable Enemy to be the Trumpeter of his Praise, while to his unspeakable Grief he is forced as a Lackey to proclaim through the City, thus shall it be done to the Man whom the King delighteth to Honour. Much thus it is in this Case; the Saints are doing God Service here, they are appearing against such as seek to dethrone their Lord and Master; and this good Service, tho' it is carefully Recorded, is not yet fully Rewarded: Mean while, the wicked World, like *Haman*, are preparing as it were a Gallows for them; but when the Heavenly Records come to be opened, and it is found what the Saints have done for Christ, and how little they have in this World received from him, they will then

March through the Streets of the Heavenly *Jerusalem* in Royal Robes, while their Enemies at a great distance shall with Grief say, thus shall it be done to the Men that Christ will Honour.

*Seventh Inference.* Is Christ such an Excellent Person? What an unspeakable Blessing must the Gospel then be to any People where it is faithfully Preached? The more Excellent Christ is, the greater a Blessing is the Gospel. The great End of God's giving the Gospel, is to reveal the Excellency of Jesus Christ. He is there declared to be the Son of God with power; here it is we have an account of his Dignity, as well as of his Ignominy; and he that doth not in all his Preaching exalt Christ, is no Gospel Preacher. *Paul* was a great Gospel Preacher, and saith he, *I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him Crucified,* 1 Cor. 2. 2. If it had not been for the Gospel we had never known Christ's Excellency; for look as in those Parts of the World where the Gospel is not Preached, Christ is not at all Regarded; so if we had not come to the Knowledge of Christ by the Gospel, 'tis not Carnal Wisdom could have found out his Excellency; 'tis only the Spirit of God in the Gospel that can take of his, and shew it unto us. Hence you Read, that when *Peter* had confessed Christ to be the Son of the Living God, *Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou Simon Bar-jona, for Flesh and Blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven,* Matt. 16. 16, 17. How should we say then as Psal. 89. 15. *Blessed is the People that know the*



*the joyful Sound?* &c. The Queen of *Sheba* could say, when she saw the Glory, and heard the Wisdom of *Solomon*, who was a Type of Christ, *Happy are thy Men, happy are these thy Servants, which stand continually before thee, and hear thy Wisdom,* 1 Kings 10. 8. How much more happy are they who sit under the dropings of the Sanctuary, and daily hear those things which the Angels stoop down to look into (c). We cannot now enjoy the Gospel without some Expence; but bless God for the Gospel at any rate, and take heed of putting a slight upon it, or the true Messengers of it; for Christ takes special notice of such, and takes it as done to himself: As you may see *Luke* 10. at large. He is there sending his Disciples to Preach the Gospel, and saith he, v. 10, 11, 12. *But into whatsoever City ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the Streets of the same City, and say, even the very Dust of your City which cleaveth on us, do we wipe off against you, &c.* and adds, *it shall be more tollerable in that Day for Sodom, than for that City:* And gives the reason, v. 16. *he that despiseth you, despiseth me, &c.* O take heed of sinning away the Gospel, for when the Gospel is gone, Christ is gone!

*Eighth Inference.* Is Christ such a Glorious and Excellent Person? What Matter of Lamentation is it that he is no more Preached; by reason whereof his Excellencies are so little known. How unworthy are we of the Name of Ministers of Christ if we do not Preach him? And yet

yet how little of the Sound of this Doctrine is gone forth? I am not speaking only of those Dark Parts of the Earth, which are full of the Habitations of Cruelty, but even of this poor Land of our Nativity.

The time has been when almost all the Cry from the Pulpits (by some) was Loyalty, Loyalty, as if the Gods had been come down in the likeness of Men; and nothing else would serve but Obedience, even unto Death: But since the Reign of King *William* of blessed Memory, and of our present Queen *Anne*, whom God hath in much Mercy to this Nation raised up as a Nursing-mother to his *Israel*, now there is ~~so~~ so much need of this Doctrine to be Preached, these Oracles are ceas'd; and that time that was wont to be spent in Preaching up Loyalty, now is spent in dancing about the Calf, which some have made to themselves of their own Ear-rings: Who like those Idolatrous *Israelites* of Old, are ready to say, *These are thy Gods, O Israel*, while in the mean time Christ is but little regarded.

I confess there are some who seem to come nearer the Mark, who yet miserably miss it: They seem Zealous to Preach against Profaneness and Immorality, and to Preach up the Excellency of Virtue, and how commendable 'tis to be Sober, Just, and Charitable; but seldom any thing of Christ, unless in the winding up of all, in some single Sentence, to let their Hearers know they have not quite forgot him: But I must be bold to tell you, that the only way to lay the one to the Root of Sin, is to Preach up Christ: When Christ becomes sweet, Sin will in course become bitter, and exceeding sinful  
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in our Sight. So that till Christ is Preached, the most weighty Matter is omitted: And however Sin may be disturbed, I am confident it will never be subdued till Christ is received. We do but (as we say) beat about the Bush till we Preach Christ: And while we think to reform from Sin, only by thundering out the Threatnings of Hell and Wrath, we only white Walls, and paint Sepulchres: Sin will oft keep its Ground, notwithstanding all these Storms.

There is much talk this Day how little Conversion-work goes on, and I partly believe it; but don't much wonder at it; for if Christ is not Preached, how should Souls be Converted? What should they be Converted to? And how unlikely are they to Turn to him, if they do not in some measure know the Excellency of him? Rom. 10. 14. *And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?* This is that very Stone at which the *Jews* stumbled, and fell, and were broken; they were exceeding Zealous as to the Law, yet their Eyes being blinded by the God of this World, that so they might not see the Excellency of Christ, with what disdain did they look upon him? So that if we would have our Hearers turn Christians indeed, we must not think to do it only by preaching up, and pressing to some External Performances, much less by our Eloquent Styles, and Fine Starch'd Notions, which only can please the Itching Ears of our carnal Auditors; for tho' by this means we may much strengthen a Party, and may be looked upon by many as some great Ones; yet if Christ is not clearly  
Preached,

Preached, our Hearers are like to Perish with all their Wisdom and Sobriety.

'Tis true indeed, many may Perish under the clearest Gospel Light for want of receiving that Jesus thus Preached to them; yea, their Condemnation may be aggravated hereby: But what then shall we think of others? If some of those may Perish, all others certainly must Perish to whom Christ is not made known. I further grant, that it is not in the Power of the most faithful and able Ministers of Christ, tho' they should spend and be spent, by any Power in them to reveal Christ to the Souls of any of our Hearers, this is God's Work; we cannot open the Eyes of them that are Born Blind: Yet if we do not our utmost to hold forth the Excellencies of Christ in as clear a light as may be, God may justly (yea, he will) require the Blood of such Souls at their Teachers Hand; for what do we but turn the Blind out of the Way, if we do not do what we can to guide 'em to Christ? For saith Christ, *John 14. 6. I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life, no Man cometh to the Father but by me.*

I humbly confess I do not think my self worthy, nor indeed able, to advise the weakest of Christ's faithful Ministers how to Preach, (except in more general Terms) yet I must take leave to lament it that Christ is no more Preached; and that there are so few like-minded with *Paul*, who *determined not to know any thing but Christ, and him Crucified.*

And to think how many numerous Congregations there are, which are at best but as Sheep having no Shepherds; which sit starving from Day

Day to Day for want of the Heavenly Man-  
na; and so see Christ slighted, and so many  
Souls at the same time starved, is a sad sight.  
O then, seeing our Hearers stand so much in need  
of him, and there are such Glorious and Incom-  
parable Excellencies to be found in him, if we  
have any Love to Christ or Souls, let us make  
the clearest Discoveries we can of him; let us  
make it appear, that our great End in all our  
Preaching is to lift up Christ in the World:  
And indeed, if we that are Ministers of Christ,  
and Ambassadors for him, should not speak well  
of him, who shall? How shall we answer it  
at the great Day, if it be there proved, that in-  
stead of Preaching of Christ, we have been  
Preaching only our selves? And if instead of  
shewing how far he hath excelled all others, we  
have only or chiefly aimed to shew how far we  
could excel others? And if instead of being  
Candlesticks our selves to hold forth this Light  
of the World, we only make Christ as the  
Candlestick to set forth our own Lights? What  
is this but a robbing Christ of his Glory,  
and setting his Crown upon our own Heads?

To conclude this Head; I doubt not but Christ  
hath many faithful Ministers both in City and  
Country, who are Preaching Christ (at least  
once) every Sabbath-Day, and to these I pre-  
sume what I have said (under this Head at least)  
will be no offence; but sure I am, there is (more  
generally speaking) too much Cause among one  
Party and another for this Lamentation I have  
taken up. And as for such as admire Christ, and  
seem only to Preach Christ, 'tis pity these few  
Friends of the Bridegroom are no more employed  
in this Work: One half Hour or Hour in a  
Week

Week is too little to spend on such a Copious Subject; nor will it properly bring us under the deserved denomination of Labourers: A little less time spent in Coffee-houses, and a little more spent in the Pulpit, would do well. The World (or at least the Saints) will be ready to say (do what we can) that we have seen but little Excellency in him, when we speak so sparingly of him. I am not in the least reflecting on our Fathers in *Israel*, who have by long and hard Labours spent almost all their strength in Christ's Vineyard, even till gray Hairs are upon them; but I am speaking of those that are risen up in the room of their Fathers, and have done less and worse than their Fathers, who are willing to have their Profits, but scarce willing to touch their Burden with one of their Fingers: Sirs, if we begin thus slothfully in the Morning, how shall we hold on till Night, especially if the Day should prove hot?

In a Word, seeing Christ is so darkly Preached by some, and so sparingly Preached by others, you cannot blame any Friend of the Bridegroom for taking up a Lamentation.

*Ninth Inference.* Is Christ such a Glorious and Excellent Person? What a desirable Person then is he? Never let us blame the Spouse for being Sick of Love, but rather let us blame all that are not so. We see in things natural, the more Excellent any thing is, the more desirous Men are of enjoying of it, while things of a small Value are contemned. And if so, one would think that all that have heard of Christ should be flocking to him as Doves to the Windows, not only upon the account of the

the need they stand in of him, but also upon the account of those many incomparable Excellencies that are to be found in him. One would think every Soul should be gathering unto this *Shiloh* (d), crying out, none but Christ, none but Christ: And that none should rest satisfied till they could say, *This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend*; 'tis said of him, *Hag. 2. 7. And the desire of all Nations shall come.* Indeed we find by sad Experience but few comparatively do desire him, yet is he in himself most desirable; and so he will appear at the great Day. O Sirs, when Christ comes to appear in his Glory, how will every Eye be fixed on him, and every Tongue be admiring him, saying, Is this he whom Man despised? Is this he whom the Nations abhorred? But I proceed.

*Tenth Inference.* Is Christ such a Glorious and Excellent Person? How Blind then are the Men of the World, who can see no Excellency in him? Who after all that is said of him, are saying, as the Daughters to the Love-sick Spouse, What is thy Beloved more than another Beloved? What I have spoken may be as a Glass to let such see the Film upon their own Eye, if they can see nothing else: For if Christ is thus Glorious and Excellent, it must be gross Darkness and Blindness that must be the Cause that they see no Beauty in him to desire him. If you take a Man into the Sunshine, when in its greatest Glory, and he shall see nothing, you would conclude he was Blind indeed: No less Cause have we to judge

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such

such spiritually Blind, who see no Excellency in Christ, after such clear Discoveries made of him. Hence saith the Apostle, 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4. *If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the God of this World hath blinded the Minds of them that believe not, lest the Light of the Glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the Image of God, should shine unto them.* The Devil knows Christ is an Excellent Person; and that if poor Sinners did but see what is in him, they would never rest satisfied without him; and therefore he blinds their Eyes, knowing so long they are safe in his Custody. In a Word, as the good Spirit opens the Eyes that the Soul may admire him, so 'tis the Work of this wicked One to keep Souls in Blindness and Ignorance.

*Eleventh Inference.* Is Christ such a Glorious and Excellent Person as you have heard? Then what a sad and dismal parting will Sinners have with him at the last and great Day, when it will be said, Depart from me? Here Sinners are unconcerned about him, they slight his Gracious Calls and Invitations, and prefers Sin and Satan before him; he that is in himself all, and to his Saints all, is to them as nothing at all: And what is the reason of this? Is it because he deserves no better of them? No surely, he that is so Excellent as you have heard Christ is, must needs deserve to be more highly esteemed by such contemptible Worms. But the great reason is, they do not see his Excellency, nor do they know the Virtue of this sweet Rose of *Sharon*: If they did, never did a Condemned Man



Man more earnestly desire a Pardon never did *Esau* more earnestly beg the Blessing of his Father, when he lift up his Voice and wept, than these would beg for an Interest in Christ; they would never be able to take any Comfort in all the Injoyments of this World till they could see Christ to be theirs. We see this Truth confirmed daily in the Works of Conversion; it is with many as with the Goaler, who one Day was making fast the Apostles in Prison for Preaching of Christ, and the Night after cries out, *Sirs, what must I do to be Saved?* And gladly did he receive their Advice, *Believe in the Lord Jesus,* *Acts* 16. 30. Thus you Read also of *Saul*, how he was setting out for *Damascus* in the Morning to hawl all to Prison, both Men and Women that call'd on the Name of Christ, being exceeding mad against that Way, and at Noon he falls down to the Ground as one Dead, crying, *Who art thou, Lord?* And what was the Cause of this sudden and wonderful Change, that he who in the Morning was persecuting of Christ, should at Noon cry out, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* Why, 'tis said, *Acts* 9. 27. *He had seen the Lord in the Way.* O Glorious sight! As you may judge by his own Words, for he tells us, *he could not see for the Glory of that Light,* *Acts* 22. 11. Doubtless this Light was the Sun of Righteousness; and observe, he could not see for the Glory of it; but what, did Light hinder his seeing? Had Darkness hindred him, it would have been no wonder; but that Light which causes others to see should hinder him from seeing, is strange: We may learn from hence how

great the Glory of Christ is; and look as *Paul* having seen this Light, could see nothing else; so he that hath seen by Faith the Excellency of Christ, will see no Excellency in any thing else, if compared with him. I have hinted on these Texts, to let you see how impossible it is for a Soul to be contented without Christ, that once sees what Glory and Excellency is in him: And if so, then Sinners must needs have a sad parting with Christ at Judgment, for as Christ will then appear in the brightness of his Glory, so Sinners will then have their Eyes so far opened to see that in Christ which they never saw before: Then they will have other Thoughts of him than now they have; and O the Sorrow of Heart to think of parting from him! See a clear Text for this, *Matt. 24. 30. And then shall appear the Sign of the Son of Man in Heaven, and then shall all the Tribes of the Earth Mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the Clouds of Heaven with Power and great Glory.* By the Tribes of the Earth I conceive we are to understand the *Jews*, who Rejected and Crucified Christ; but no sooner do they see him coming in his Glory to judge them, but they begin to Mourn. O! What a Heart-breaking Sentence will that be, *Depart from me?* How will they in Anguish of Spirit reply, What from thee, Lord! This is a hard Saying, who can bare it? If our Sentence may not be Reversed, let those Words (from me) be left out and we are satisfied. O! How deep a Wound will it make in Sinners to hear Christ say to his Saints, Come ye Blessed?

sed? &c. To see the many Thousands of *Israel* going up the Hill to the Height of *Sion*, with Palms in their Hands, Praising God, and Singing, This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend, while they (of all Men most Miserable) must depart to the Left Hand. If Christ was not such an Excellent Person, it would not be such a Cut to depart from him; but the more Excellent Christ is, the Harder will Sinners find it to part with him. For look as in other Cases, if we lose a Thing we neither love nor want, we matter not such Losses, but are wont to say, Let it go; but if it be a Thing of great Value, or that which we cannot live Comfortably without, how near doth such a Loss go to us? If a Man lose his Goods, or Children, these Losses being repairable may be borne the more patiently; the Injoyment of Christ may make up all these Losses a Hundredfold: But the Loss of Christ is an irreparable Loss, which will make Sinners curse the Day in which they were Born, when they come to be separated from the Presence of the Lord; if not for the Love they bear to him, yet upon the Account of the Glory they see in him, and the Need they stand in of him. And that which will yet make this Cup the more bitter, is, that this will be a parting without the least Hopes of meeting again; when they must for ever bid farewell to this Sweet Rose of *Sharon*, being shut out of the Paradise of God. With what a sad Heart, think you, was *Adam* driven out of Paradise, where he had seen so much of the Glory of God? And yet he was restored to a better State: How much more sad may we suppose they will be who are separated for ever from Christ? When we part with Friends without Hopes of meeting again it goes near;

## 192 *Christ the most Excellent:*

ACTS 20. 37, 38. *And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's Neck, and kissed him, sorrowing most of all for the Words which he spake, that they should see his Face no more.* But it asswages our Grief to think of meeting again. A Remarkable Passage you have concerning *David*, when he had parted with his Young Child, he Comforts himself, *I shall go to him,* 2 Sam. 12. 23. He had Hopes that he should meet his Child in Glory: Ah, but when he parts with *Absolom*, who died in the Act of Rebellion, and as one that he had no Hopes to meet in Glory, how bitterly doth he bewail him? 2 Sam. 18. 33. *Would God I had died for thee, O Absolom, my Son, my Son!* He knew he was fitter to die than *Absolom*; and Chap. 19. 4. he renews his Lamentation, he covers his Face, as desirous neither to see, nor be seen; and cried out with a loud Voice, *O my Son Absolom! &c.* As if he had said, *I shall see thy Fair and Beautiful Face no more:* It was not the News of Victory that could remove his Sorrow. And from hence we must conclude it will be a doleful parting Sinners will have with Christ, because they will have no Hopes to meet again, no more than *David* had to meet *Absolom*; and if *David* mourned so upon this Account, because *Absolom* was miserable, when he himself was happy, how much more Cause will Sinners have to mourn when they must part from Christ, to think how Happy and Blessed he is, and how Miserable they must be? To depart, and be cursed too, will be very sad. And that the Wicked will have no Hopes when in Hell ever to Enjoy Christ seems clear from that Passage of *Dives*, Luke 16. 23, 24. He there only begs that *Lazarus* might be sent to him to cool his Tongue, &c. But what, was it  
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not a more desirable Thing for him to be with *Lazarus* in *Abraham's* Bosom, than to have *Lazarus* sent to him with a Drop of Water? Yes, surely it was; but why then did he not ask it? Why, because he knew it was in vain; his Extremity moved him to ask for a little Ease; but he well knew there was no Hopes of his Recovery, and that the Gulf of Despair that was between him and Happiness was too deep for him ever to wade through, and therefore would not so much as once ask for that which he knew was so impossible to be obtained. And since this parting from Christ will be so sad, Sinners, beware of this Day, and prevent your Misery by a speedy closing with Christ; say as *Elisha* to *Elijah*, when he heard he was to be taken into Heaven, and he left behind, *As the Lord liveth, and as thy Soul liveth, I will not leave thee,* 2 Kings 2. 2. Or as *Ruth* said to *Naomi*, *Ruth* 1. 16. *Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge, &c.* so do thou by earnest Prayer intreat him that he would never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

4. Use shall be of Exhortation, First to Sinners, then to Saints.

1. To Sinners. Is Christ such an Excellent Person? Let me exhort you then to give up yourselves to him, to cast your Care upon him, that so you may have an Interest in him. One would think this Use should be useless; and that all that have but heard of him should believe in him without any more Arguments to this End, since it tends so much to their Happiness so to do. Was I to tell a starving Man of the nourishing Vertue of Food, and where it was to be had, I need say

No more to him; But alas, alas, tho' Sinners desire to be happy, yet so they hope they may be without Christ, or at least without such an inward Work of Faith with Power as we press unto. And on this Account nothing is more difficult than to gain the Sinner's Consent to receive Christ, and to rely alone upon him. And therefore to all that I have said I shall lay down some quickening Motives to this great and necessary Work, that so all I have hitherto said may not be ineffectual. But alas, what can I say? Or rather what can I do? I have to do with dead Sinners, I am going to Prophecy, but 'tis over dry Bones; I may as well go and call at the Graves for the Dead to come forth, if the Spirit with the Word doth not say come. As there is nothing more easie than to talk of Faith, or to fancy we have Faith when we have not; so scarce any thing more difficult than to beget True Faith in the Soul, *Eph. 1. 19.* Well, tho' this is God's Work, yet, as *Peter* once said to Christ, *Luke 5. 5, 6. Master, we have toiled all the Night, and have taken nothing, nevertheless at thy Command I will let down the Net; and when they had this done, they enclosed a great Multitude of Fishes :* So tho' my Words, as coming from me, can only reach the Ear, yet since Christ hath commanded me to invite the Guests, I will do as I am bidden, and leave it to him to compel them to come in. I'll cast the Net, and who knows but I may this once enclose a Multitude, and may from henceforth become a Fisher of Men? For tho' with Man this is impossible, yet with God nothing is impossible. God can do that in a Moment which we cannot do all our Days. And since it is so, I proceed to some Motives, hoping God will make some of them as

Arrows

Arrows that shall stick fast in the Hearts of his Enemies, that so they may be made to fall under him; and that some Wound may be made hereby that may never be cured but by Christ the Great Physician of Souls.

1. Motive to get an Interest in Christ, consider you stand in need of him, and are most miserable without him. If he was never so Excellent in himself, yet if you did not need him, it would be no Wonder if I could not prevail with you to renounce all for him. *The full Soul loatheth the Honeycomb (e)*. A Man that is in Health matters not the Physician: But now, you who are Sinners, you need Christ. A naked Man doth not more stand in need of Cloaths, nor a starving Man of Food, nor a sick Man of the Physician, than you do of Christ. No Condition in this World can render you so truly Miserable as to be without Christ. Hence when the Apostle would set forth the Depth of that Misery those *Ephesians* were in while in a Natural State, he tells them that at that time they were without Christ *(f)*. O sad Condition! A Man may be without Honour from the World, and be Happy; he may be without Friends and Relations, and yet be Happy; he may be without Riches and Wealth, and be Happy; he may be deprived of his Liberty, and yet be Happy; yea, he may lose his Life by the Hands of wicked Men, and yet be Happy; Christ will make Amends for all these Losses: But Woe to such as are without Christ; nothing but Destruction and Misery are in their Paths; such can take no true Comfort in any thing they enjoy in  
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(e) *Prov.* 27. 7. (f) *Eph.* 2. 12.

this World, to think these are like to be all the Portion that ever they shall have.

2. Motive to beg of God to Interest you in Christ is this, God will accept of no Service from you, or Performances done by you, so long as you are not found in Christ. It may be Sinners think it now they are miserable they hope to free themselves from it; they will now make God Amends for their former Sins, which were the Cause of their Misery; they will now cease to do evil, and will now learn to do well; they will now reform, pray, hear, read, and be charitable: But let such know these are but a Cobweb Covering; they build but upon a Sandy Foundation; for God will accept of no Offering at their Hands till they receive Christ, John 15: 5. *Without me ye can do nothing, or separate from me*, as it may be read. Such do but labour in vain, and spend their Strength for nought, seeing *the Sacrifice of the Wicked is an Abomination to the Lord*, Prov. 15. 8.

3. Motive. Consider you can never possibly get to Heaven if you die out of Christ. You have heard, I doubt not, of Happiness, of an Inheritance, of a Kingdom and Crown that fadeth not away; you have heard of those Rivers of Pleasure (g) which run through the Heavenly Paradise, and of that Fulness of Joy that is in God's Presence for Evermore (h); and I doubt not but you desire some time or other to partake of this Happiness and Blessedness; nor can I think you are altogether without Hope that you shall so do: And tho' it may be you care not for Duties, or whether God accepts your Service, yet you hope your  
Persons



Persons shall be accepted, and that your Souls shall be saved, and then you will be well enough; if you get but to Heaven, it's no matter which Way. But know, Sinners, if you die out of Christ you will find your selves miserably mistaken; you will then find *there is no other Name given under Heaven whereby you can be saved but by Christ*, Acts 4. 12. A Damned Soul may as soon break his Chains, and come out of Hell, as you can get to Heaven out of Christ. As he is the only Purchaser of Heaven and Happiness, so he will not bestow that which cost him so Dear on them that die in Enmity to him. Heaven is an Inheritance, and the Children only can lay Claim to it who are Heirs and Joint-heirs with Christ. As Christ is the Purchaser, so 'tis by a Covenant-relation to him that we come to have a Right to the Thing purchased. He hath told us plainly he is the Way, *John* 14. 6. And since it is so, what a forcible Motive should this be? How canst thou think of coming short of that Rest above? Thou hadst better never have heard of Heaven, than to miss of it at last. How sad will it be to see *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, (and it may be some of your near and dear Relations too) in the Kingdom of Heaven, and you your selves shut out (i)? How sad to wade through the Howling Wilderness of this troublesom World? To go through a Vale of Tears, and Valley of Misery, and not to enter into the Good Land at last? And yet thus it must be with thee if thou comest short of an Interest in Christ: Therefore if thou hast no Love to him, yet if thou hast any Desire after Heaven and Happiness, give up thy self speedily to  
him,

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(i) *Luke* 13. 28.

him, since 'tis impossible without doing the one, that thou shouldest partake of the other.

4. Motive. Thou canst never escape Hell and Eternal Vengeance if thou art not found in Christ. It may be some Prophane Wretch that hath read the former Motive may think thus in his Heart, Well, if I never get to Heaven, if I never am employed in Praising and Blessing God, if this be all I care not. Poor Soul, thou knowest not what the Loss of Heaven will be; but know this will not be all, for *he that believeth not shall be damned*, *Mark 16. 16.* If thou canst be so well content to be shut out of Heaven, canst thou dwell in devouring Flames, and contend with everlasting Burnings (k)? If thou desirest not the Company of Saints, dost thou not dread the Company of Devils? If thou dost not desire to hear the Melodious Songs and Well-tuned Voices of the former, art thou not afraid of the doleful Shrieks of the latter? If thou art not desirous to dwell in that Land of Light, art thou not afraid to dwell in the *Blackness of Darkness for ever* (l)? If thou dost not desire to partake of the Saints Freedom, art thou not afraid of those heavy Chains that will be put upon thee? Ah, sure if thou could'st but look in at Hell Gates, and there see the Worm that gnaws them, could'st there see them *as a wild Bull in a Net, full of the Fury of the Lord* (m), *and the Smoak of their Torments ascending for ever and ever* (n): If thou could'st there hear their doleful Sobs and Sighing, Weeping and Wailing, and gnashing of Teeth, thou wouldest never (one would think) make light of Christ more.

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(k) *Isa. 33. 14.* (l) *Jude 13.* (m) *Isa. 51. 20.*  
 (n) *Rev. 14. 11.*

more. Why, Sinners, this must be the Portion of your Cup if you get not into Christ; 'tis only Jesus that delivers from the Wrath to come, *1 Thes. 1. 10.* If you will not flee to Christ, you cannot flee from the Wrath to come; thou canst no more escape Hell out of Christ, than they that were out of the Ark could escape Death and Destruction; Hell or Christ will be thy Portion.

5. Motive. And it follows as a natural Consequence from what hath been spoken: Consider Death will be very Dreadful upon this Account; this Messenger looks grim enough upon Saints, but will look much more grim upon Sinners. It may be while you only hear of those Things, and they seem at a Distance, so long as thou art in Health and Strength, none of these Things move thee; but *what wilt thou do in the Day of Visitation?* When Death comes to stare thee in the Face, when thou feelest the Bands of Nature untying, and when Lovers and Friends can do thee no good, when thou comest to see Time cut off from thee, and a vast Eternity before thee, when these Things which thou hast heard of draw near to thee, *Where wilt thou flee for Help? And where wilt thou leave thy Glory (o)?* O how Death will sting a Christless Soul! How dark will the Valley and Shadow of Death be to those who have not the Light of God's Countenance shining upon them! And how soon may all these Things come upon thee! It may be now thou puttest far from thee this Evil Day, and thinkest if thou must be Miserable, yet it may be many Years first, and therefore 'tis time enough to be concerned about it, or to seek to avoid it, when it is  
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at hand. But how dost thou know, O Man, how soon this Day may come upon thee? It may be when thou art crying, Peace, Peace. Christ calls some at Midnight, which is a Time of the greatest Security, and when Drowsiness most seizes upon us. Death cuts some off in the Morning of their Years. God may say to thee as to that Rich Man, Thou Fool, this Night shall thy Soul be required of thee. When thou liest down, thou dost not know whether ever thou shalt arise: When thou shuttest thine Eyes to sleep, thou knowest not but thou may'st open them in Hell. So long as thou continuest out of Christ, thy Precious Soul hang, as it were, by a twined Thread over a bottomless Pit; the Pit is Hell, the Thread is thy Life, which is continually drawing nearer to an End; and when once this Thread is snapt, thou art gone for ever: In that Day all thy presumptuous Thoughts of obtaining Mercy will perish (*p*), and thy *Hope* will be *as the giving up of the Ghost*. But now methinks I see the Sinner begin to weep and to cry out, Is there no Hopes? To which I answer, No Hopes if thou diest out of Christ; but if thou hast now a Heart to Embrace him there is Hopes; which brings me to the next Motive.

6. Motive. Consider Christ is able to save thee, if thou hast but a Heart to come to him, and to rely sincerely upon him. And that thou mayest well suppose from what hath been spoken of him, Poor Soul, it may be thou feest thy Sins to be so many, and so great, that thou art ready to say, Sure there is no Help to be had for thee, thy Wound is too deep to be cured: And indeed  
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if there was no other Help but what is from thy self thou mightest well despair. But hear what God saith, *Hos. 13. 9. O Israel, thou hast destroyed thy self; but in me is thy Help found.* God hath laid Help upon One that is mighty, and *is able to save to the utmost all that come to him* through his Son, *Heb. 7. 25.* And saith Christ, *Matt. 11. 28. Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you Rest.* If Christ cannot save thee, it must be either because he cannot satisfie for Sin, or else because he cannot rescue from Satan: But know, he hath already made Satisfaction for Sin, yea, for as great Sins as thine, yea, for thy Sins, if thou hast a Heart to come to him, and believe in him. God hath from Heaven proclaimed him his Son, in whom he is well pleased, *Matt. 3. 17.* The great End of Christ's coming into the World was to finish Transgression, and to make an end of Sins, and to make Reconciliation for Iniquity, *Dan. 9. 24.* and he hath finished this Work; he died a Bloody Sacrifice, the Just for the Unjust; he was made Sin for us that knew no Sin. And as he hath satisfied Justice, so he hath conquered Satan; he hath bound the Strong Man, and so is able to spoil his Goods. So that there is no just Cause for thee to fear thy Sins are too great to be pardoned by Christ, if they are not too dear to be parted with for him.

7. Motive to believe in Christ is this, he is not only able, but willing, to save such as come to him. And indeed if we could not be sure of this, all that hath been said would be but little Encouragement for Sinners to venture on him. For look as in another Case, a Rich Man may be able to pay a Poor Man's Debts, but for want of a Will the Poor Man may go to Prison: But as Christ hath

hath Ability to save, so he hath a Will to save all that come to him. If thou art but unfeignedly willing to receive him, thou may'st be sure he will receive thee, *John 6. 37. And him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.* If thou desirest nothing more than Christ, thou shalt be put off with nothing less. Yea, let me further tell thee, it will be the Joy of his Heart to receive thee; for as it was the great End of his leaving his Glory, and suffering so much in the World, that he might save Sinners, *1 Tim. 1. 15.* so he must needs rejoice to see his Seed, and to see this Glorious Work accomplished. This is clearly held forth in those Two Parables in the *15th* of *Luke*, concerning the Lost Sheep and the Prodigal Son. The Lost Sheep is such a Lost Sinner as thou art, Christ is the Seeker as well as a Saviour; he seeks and finds Sinners before they truly seek him: And observe the Joy, Neighbours and Friends are call'd in to rejoice, because the Sheep that was lost is found. And he adds, *V. 7. I say unto you, that likewise Joy shall be in Heaven over one Sinner that repenteth.* A like Instance in the Prodigal; a Prodigal indeed; he had spent all he had, and he could spend no more; he had gone so far off he had worn the very Shoes off his Feet: Now one would have thought there had been no Hopes of his Father's receiving him into Favour again, or if he did, yet that it must have been through much Persuasion, and that he should have had but coarse Entertainment, and that his Father should never so much as Smile upon him, or take any Delight in him: But behold! For thy Encouragement, thou doubting Soul, the Father sees him a great Way off, it may be as far as thou art; well, and what doth he do?

One would have thought the next News should have been, he fell upon him, and killed him; but behold and wonder! He fell on his Neck and kissed him; and when he had supplied his Wants, and furnished him with all Things necessary, they began to be Merry: Here is Musick, and Dancing, and all imaginable Demonstrations of Joy: And notwithstanding the Elder Son did all he could to spoil the Mirth, the Father tells him, it was meet that we should make merry, and be glad; and then adds the Reason, for this thy Brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found. Observe, here is not One Word of upbraiding him with what he had done, or of the low Condition he had been in when he would have been glad to have eaten Husks, but all Joy to see him come safe home. No doubt but this Prodigal had once some Fears, as it may be thou may'st, whether his Father would receive him, as we may suppose from the Method he resolved upon to pacifie him; but at his Return all his Fears are at an End; he finds better Entertainment than he expected, or deserved. Let those Things encourage thee to return as he did, and thou wilt certainly speed as he did.

And now methinks I hear some poor Sinner say, What you have said is very encouraging; I have now only One Thing that discourages me from coming to him, and that is the Consideration of his Glorious Excellency which you have spoken so much of in the Doctrinal Part; for when I consider what a Glorious Person he is, and what a worthless and sinful Worm I am, I see my self so unworthy of such a Priviledge, that I dare scarce lift up my Eyes to the Place where his Honour dwells; what shall I do in this Case? To

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which I Answer, I grant indeed there is a vast Inequality between Christ and thee, and that thou art unworthy to have any Fellowship or Communion with him; but so were all that ever came unto him. Thou art unworthy, but worthy is the Lamb that was slain: Christ hath Worthiness enough for himself and thee too. Christ doth not say he that cometh worthily, but he that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. Thou sayest thou art unworthy, and so did the Prodigal, Luke 15. 21, 22. *And the Son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against Heaven and in thy Sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy Son; but the Father said unto his Servants, bring forth the best Robe, and put it on him, &c.* As if he had said, Nevertheless, or notwithstanding his Unworthiness; and not only a Robe, but the Best Robe; by which Interpreters do generally understand the Robe of Christ's Righteousness; this must be put upon this unworthy Prodigal to make him worthy. So that you see the deepest Sense of your Unworthiness will be no Barr to the Imputation of Christ's Righteousness. When God saves any Soul, he will do it in such a Way as shall most magnifie the Riches of his Free Grace; and therefore doth it not upon the Account of any thing done by us, or any Worthiness in us, for so to do would eclipse the Glory of his Grace; but he doth it purely and alone upon the Account of the Worthiness of Christ; so that none have Reason to be discouraged from coming to Christ upon this Account. And sure I am, if you are now unworthy, your refusing to come to him, and believe in him, will never make you more worthy. This is a sure Rule to be observed, the longer any stand off from Christ, the more unworthy



worthy they will be at last to come to him. But if after all that I have said thou yet resolvest to stand off from Christ, let me give thee a Caution, whoever thou art, and it may be a seasonable one; and 'tis this, to beware lest there is not Pride of Heart at the Bottom of thy pretended Humility. Should a King invite a Beggar to come to his Royal Palace, and should promise to supply all his Wants, and he should refuse to go till he had better Cloaths, I think in such a Case every one would say it was his Pride that kept him back: And I cannot but fear those that pretend to have a Beggar's Purse, I mean, nothing to commend them to God, have also a Proud Heart, which is like to do them more Harm than their Poverty. Thou sayest if thou hadst more Worthiness then thou wouldest venture to come: And why then more than now? Sinner, speak out, and tell the Truth, is it not because then thou couldest come with more Honour and Credit? Is it not because thou hadst rather come as a Buyer than a Beggar? And is not this the Pride of thy Heart? I confess such as go with Money in their Hand are likest to speed with Men, and are most welcome; but he that comes without Money is most welcome to Christ (q). Our *Joseph* fills his Brethrens Sacks, but returns their Money to them again, *Gen.* 42. 25.

Let a Sense therefore of thy Unworthiness rather excite thee to come to Christ than discourage thee, since it is that which he requires of, and works in all that do come to him; and hadst thou that Worthiness thou seemest so much to desire, it may well be questioned whether ever thou wouldst come; for he that will not beg when he

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(q) *Isa.* 55. 1.

hath neither Meat nor Money, will never beg when he hath both. 'Tis a foolish Opinion of Self-worthiness that keeps so many from Christ; and how that should further thy coming, which hinders others, I see not. You read how those that lay under the Hedges, and in the Highways, came to the Supper, while the Rich Merchants and full Farmers made light of it, and went their Way. So the Prodigal came to himself (r) before he had any Thoughts of coming to his Father: He wanted to be fed with the Husks before he came home to partake of his Father's Bread. In a Word, take heed of complimenting your selves out of your own Happiness; if your Unworthiness in this Case reflects on any, it is on Christ. Do then as *Abigail* did, who, when *David's* Servants had told her their Master's Design to take her to Wife, *she rose up, and bowed herself on her Face to the Earth, and said, Let thine Handmaid be a Servant to wash the Feet of the Servants of my Lord,* 1 Sam. 25. 40, 41. but yet for all her low Thoughts of herself, she had more Manners than to deny him, and more Wit than to refuse such an advantageous Match: For in the very next Verse 'tis said *she became his Wife.* So do thou think as meanly, and speak as lowly of thy self as thou canst, yet shew more Manners to Christ, and Love to thy self, than to refuse that which tends so much to thy Advantage.

The Second Exhortation shall be to Saints in a few Particulars.

1. Is Christ such a Glorious and Excellent Person? And is he yours? Then see that you praise God for this so great a Blessing. Great Mercies call

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(r) *Luke 15. 17.*

call for Loud Praises : O how should it enlarge our Hearts to praise God, to think that he should ever bestow such a Person on us! To praise God for Christ will be our great Work in Heaven, let us begin it now on Earth. When Christ appeared on Earth, we read of a *Multitude of Heavenly Hosts praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the Highest, &c. Luke 2. 13, 14.* And if God hath Revealed Christ to our Souls, we have Cause to join with them. If Praise is due to God for any thing more than other it is for Christ, since he is so Incomparably Excellent ; and God expects this from us who are his own People ; we only are Interested in him, and know his Excellency. How can we but praise God for this Gift, when many as good as we by Nature have neither Part nor Lot in this Matter? The more Excellent and Distinguishing the Gift, and the more Unworthy the Receiver, the more Praise and Thanks is due to the Giver. When Good *Simeon* had taken Christ into his Arms, he Blessed God, *Luke 2. 28.* so let us do who have received him by Faith. When our Lord was on Earth, you read how they praised God with a loud Voice for all the Mighty Works they had seen, saying, *Blessed be the King that cometh in the Name of the Lord, Luke 19. 37, 38.* But some of the Pharisees desired Christ to rebuke his Disciples ; and he answered and said unto them, *I tell you, if these should hold their Peace, the Stones would immediately cry out ;* either to carry on that Work which they gave over, or else to shame them for their Ingratitude in so doing.

2. Let me exhort you to Fruitfulness in good Works, that so you may not only praise God with your Lips, but with your Lives. Let us not

be barren while we profess our selves ingrafted into him. 'Tis by your receiving of Christ that you become capable of doing that which is pleasing in God's Sight; and now he expects your Fruit should remain (f), and that while he hath done so much for your Good, you should do something, yea, all you can, for his Glory. You that stand so nearly related to this Glorious Person had need to take heed how you walk, lest you more disgrace him by you Walk than you honour him by your Words; which you may soon do. Our Conformity to him will be the most convincing Demonstration of our Love to him, and of the Esteem we have for him. The World will more regard our Lives than our Lips. And sure I am, the Honour of Christ suffers much when you sin. If an open Enemy to Christ be Drunk, or Swears, &c. the World take little Notice of that; but if a Saint's Foot slip, then, Ah, Ha, so we would have it! Therefore it stands the Saints in Hand, while they admire his Excellency, to walk as he walked (t); and 'tis only such that Christ will own to be his Friends, John 15. 14. *Ye are my Friends if ye do whatsoever I command you.*

3. Is Christ such an Excellent Person? Then be not ashamed of him. What, be ashamed of him that is King of Kings? Sure I am it was not without good Cause that *Moses esteemed the Reproaches of Christ greater Riches than the Treasures of Egypt, Heb. 11. 26.* The World indeed are ashamed of Christ; when they see how far his Worship is from being dressed according to the Modes of the Time, they are ashamed to follow him; and many at best are like *Nicodemus*, that  
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(f) *John 15. 16.* (t) *John 2. 6.*

came to *Jesus* by Night (v). But let me tell such, their greatest Shame is to be thus ashamed of Christ. Sure I am there is no just Cause for us to be ashamed of Christ; we shall not (if we are Saints) be ashamed to appear with Christ, why should we be ashamed to appear for Christ here? Let us remember what Shame he underwent for us, and yet *he hid not his Face from Shame and Spitting*, Isa. 50. 6. i. e. He was not ashamed of his Shame; and shall we be ashamed of him? 'Tis enough for the Servant to be as his Lord (u): The more Glorious a Person Christ is, the less Cause we have to be ashamed of him.

4. If Christ be such an Excellent Person, then do not sinfully decline any Sufferings you may be called to for his Sake. O what a Shame is it for us, and a Dishonour to Christ, when we turn our Back before the Enemy, and cowardly run when we should be fighting the good Fight of Faith? How do we hereby undervalue Christ, and give the World Occasion to think that his Glorious Person we talk so much of, and seem to glory so much in, is not able to requite a few Days Suffering for him; and that that Glory that shall be revealed, that Inheritance and Kingdom above which Christ hath promised for them that suffer for him, and are faithful unto Death, are not all worthy to be compared with these light Afflictions, nor able to make us Amends for them? But on the other Hand, what an Honour is it to Christ when we can sing in the Prison (w), and take *joyfully the spoiling of our Goods* (x)? Yea, when we can say as Paul, *I am not only ready to be bound, but to die for the Name of Jesus?*

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(v) *John* 3.2. (u) *Matt.* 10.25. (w) *Acts* 16.15. (x) *Heb.* 10.34

When we can leap for Joy to hear our Names cast out for the Son of Man's Sake (y), and when with the Martyr we can for Joy clap our Hands in the Flames. Christ takes this well at our Hands, and laughs at the Trial of his Innocent Ones (z), to see them Fight so Valiantly. My Brethren, we know not what Times some of us may live to see, nor how heavy a Cross we may carry after him, before we come to wear our Crown; we know not how bitter a Cup God may put into our Hands before we come to drink of the Rivers of his Pleasures. Our Brethren beyond the Seas are suffering Hard Things, and are bearing the very Heat and Burden of the Day: And as it is not long since we were drinking of the same Cup, so it may be but a while before the same Cup, or One more Bitter, may pass again unto us. We see those mighty Hunters, which some Years ago had run themselves almost out of Wind in pursuing Christ's Innocent Lambs, (being forced to rest a while) are now ready for their Game again; they long to be hawling Men and Women to Prison, and to be again enriching themselves with the Plundered Goods of the Poor *Israelites*; they only stay for the Word of Command: And should our God, for Wise Ends, leave us once more to the Will of our Enemies, I know nothing than can more animate and incourage us to suffer than to consider for whose Sake we are to suffer. If *Cesar* could so animate his Soldiers in a Storm, saying, Fear not, you carry *Cesar*; much more may it incourage us under the greatest Storm of Persecution that can arise to think we suffer for Jesus, who will never leave us here, nor suffer us  
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(y) *Luke* 6. 23. *Acts* 5. 41. (z) *Job* 9. 23.

to go unrewarded hereafter. The only Way to endure, and not to fear the Wrath of those Enemies, is to look to him that is invisible (a): This Excellent Person will surely avenge his People on their Enemies, tho' he may bear long, and then he will lay heavier Burdens on them than ever they could on as.

Lastly, Let me exhort you to Contentedness in every Condition. If Christ is but thine thou canst want no good Thing. Sure I am, all those Things thou dost want, or canst wish for, are not to be compared to what thou dost enjoy. 'Tis unbecoming to see the Saints envying the Rich Man, or the Honourable Man, when God hath bestowed more on them than all that they have can amount to: The Richest Miser on Earth, if not in Christ, will be glad e'er long to change his Condition with the poorest Saint; as is clear in that Instance of *Dives* and *Lazarus*. A Saint that is interested in this Glorious Person, at the lowest may say as *Hab. 3. 17, 18.* *Although the Figtree shall not blossom, neither shall Fruit be in the Vines, the Labour of the Olive shall fail, and the Fields shall yield no Meat, the Flock shall be cut off from the Fold, and there shall be no Herd in the Stalls, yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my Salvation.* A Saint hath no Cause to murmur under Losses and Afflictions, not only because all Things shall work for his Good, but because in his lowest Condition he hath that which will infinitely outweigh all the Enjoyments in this World, and that which he can never lose; for tho' he may lose his Substance, he may lose his Reputation in the World, he may lose his Health, yea, his Life, but can

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(a) *Heb. 11. 27.*

can never lose his Christ; he will have this Pearl of Price in his lowest Condition. What is said of *Mary*, Luke 10. 42. may be said of each Saint, *She hath chosen that good Part that shall never be taken from her*; and this will ballance against all other Things. I remember a Passage I have read of an Ambassador from *Spain*, that told *Henry the Fourth*, that Magnificent King of *France*, of the Ample Dominions of the King of *Spain*; said the Ambassador, My Master is King of *Spain*; is he so, said *Henry*? And I am King of *France*. But, said he, my Master is King of *Portugal*; and, said *Henry*, I am King of *France*. My Master is King of *Naples*, said the Ambassador; and I am King of *France*, said *Henry*. My Master is King of *Cicily*; and, said *Henry*, I am King of *France*. But my Master is King of *Nova Hispania*; and, said *Henry*, I am King of *France*. But, said the Ambassador, my Master is King of the *West-Indies*; and, said *Henry*, I am King of *France*: To let him know he esteemed that One Kingdom of *France* to be Equivalent to all the Petty Kingdoms belonging unto *Spain*. To apply this to our present Purpose, One Carnal Man hath great Wit and Learning; but a Believer hath got Christ: Another hath Honours; but the Believer hath Christ: Another hath great Riches, and large Dominions; but the Believer hath Christ. And if the Men of the World are so well content with this, the Believer hath much more Cause to be contented, seeing Christ is far better than all these; for when all these will fade as a Leaf, this Sweet Rose of *Sharon* will be fresh and flourishing. All the Enjoyments of this World will avail nothing at Death, they will all then appear to be but Vanity and Vexation of Spirit. I may allude to those Words of

*Haman*



*Haman* to his Friends; when he told them of all his Riches, and how he was advanced above the Princes, and how he was invited with the King to the Banquet, yet saith he, *All this availeth me nothing so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sit in the King's Gate* (b). So may a Christless Soul say, I have so much Honour, so much Wealth, so much of the Delights of this World, yet all these avail me nothing so long as I am without Christ in the World; I want the Pearl of great Price. But how may the Saints sing in the Valley and Shadow of Death? The Wicked have a seeming Advantage of the Saints now, but the Saints will have a real Advantage of them then: For as there is a far greater Excellency in Christ than is, or can be, in any Creature, so they must needs be more happy who are interested in him, than they can be who have the greatest of the Enjoyments of this World without him. Better to be a Beggar upon a Dung-hil, if in Christ, than to be a King upon a Throne, if without him. So that there can be no just Cause of Discontent to the Saints in their worst Condition, since their Worst is much better than the Wicked's Best: The Saints Sorrow is better than their Joy; and they are far more happy when dying than the others are in their greatest Prosperity: They may say in their lowest Condition, *The Lines are fallen to me in a pleasant Place, I have a Goodly Heritage.* Ps. 16. 6.

The Last Use shall be of Consolation to the Saints.

Is Christ so Excellent? And is he yours? This may be Matter of Comfort to you living and dying; you need not be afraid to die. O the comfortable

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(b) *Est.* 5. 11, 12, 13.

comfortable Meeting that will be e'er long between Christ and you: Tho' now he is thine, it may be he stands behind thy Wall; he shews himself but darkly as through the Lattis; but when thou goest to Heaven thou shalt see him as he is, and shalt know even as thou now art known. And O the Hugging and Embracing each other! Then thou wilt find far more in Christ than I have told, or can tell you of him. When once thou art got into the Heavenly Paradise, how Sweet will this Rose of *Sharon* be! As nothing will be more Dreadful than for Sinners to part with him, so nothing will be greater Cause of Joy to the Saints than to meet with him. When the Apostle had been speaking of meeting the Lord, and of being ever with him, he adds, *Wherefore comfort one another with these Words*, 1 Thess. 4. 17, 18. Comfortable Words indeed. When the Queen of *Sheba* had heard of the Glory and Wisdom of *Solomon*, she was not satisfied with the bare Report, but went to see him, and found much more in him than ever she had heard of him: So one would think you who are Saints, and who have heard the Report I have made of Christ from this Text, should with *Paul* be in a Strait between Two, having a Desire to depart, and be with Christ, which is far better (c); and that you should long to meet him in his Robes of Glory. If it is so Sweet to hear of this Rose of *Sharon*, it will be much more Sweet to be within the Reach of it. The nearer we come unto this Rose, or that unto us, the Sweeter it will be to us. If so Sweet to be in Christ, what will it be to be with him? This will be the Top of the Saints Happiness,

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(c) *Phil.* 1. 23.

ness, and the Fulness of their Joy. When Christ was about to leave his Disciples, he tells them he will not leave them comfortless; and what Way will he take to prevent it? Why, saith he, *I will come again, and receive you to my self,* John 14. 18. As if he had said, I well know it will put an End to all your Sorrows when you come to be where I am: And how earnestly doth Christ pray to his Father? John 14. 24. *Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me may be with me where I am, to behold my Glory which thou hast given me.* And if Christ did so desire this, sure we should. Then Christ will appear in his best Robes. Sweet Soul, let me ask thee, Was not this the Prize thou at first didst set out for, and the Mark thou hast ever since been aiming at? If thou art a Saint I know it was, Christ being the Center of a Believing Soul: And if it was, how shouldst thou long to be at thy Journey's End? O how will the first View of this Glorious Person make thee Amends for all the Labour, Sorrow, and Sufferings that ever thou didst undergo for him all thy Days! He will then wipe off all Tears from thine Eyes (*d*), and so wipe them off that they shall return no more: And tho' while thou art in this Wilderness State, and many a dark Cloud intervenes between thee and him, Sorrow is ready to fill thy Heart; yet when once thou art got within the Doors of thy Father's House, and hast got thy Well-beloved in thy Arms, with Assurance thou shalt part with him no more, how will Sorrow and Sighing then flee away? And how can you that have this Hope be contented without this Happiness? One would think

think Death should be the most welcome Messenger that ever your Eyes saw, and that you should rejoice to feel any Decays in Nature, and to see how quick your Sands run, and to see gray Hairs upon you, knowing these are but Symptoms of this Happy Day approaching. O with what Joy do you think good Old *Jacob* went down to *Egypt* to meet his Beloved *Joseph*, that was advanced to be the Second Man in the Kingdom, while he came from a low and mean Condition! O the Joy to that good Man, to see that Son which he had confidently concluded was torn to Pieces, now highly Exalted, and every Knee bowing to him! *Gen. 41.43.* And with what Joy did they meet! How welcome did *Joseph* make his Father and Brethren! He placed them in the best of the Land. So with what Joy should the Saints go to meet that Jesus that was once Despised and Reviled, but now highly Exalted! And how welcome will this Glorious Person make his poor Brethren! Never did the Father of the Prodigal more rejoice at the Return of his Son than thy Jesus will rejoice over thee. If there is such Joy in Heaven at the Conversion of a Sinner, what may we suppose there will be at the Salvation of a Saint? How will the very Heavens Eccho with Joyful Acclamations at the good News that our *Joseph's* Brethren are come?

Methinks I see the Blessed Jesus with Joy running to meet his Brethren to the very Gates of the New *Jerusalem*, and falling on their Necks and Kissing them, and Saluting them on this Wise, Welcome, Thrice welcome, my Dear Friends, into your Master's Joy; welcome to the Possession of that Kingdom prepared for you from before the Foundation of the Word; Welcome, you weary Pilgrims,

*Or, The Glory of Christ unvail'd. 217*

Pilgrims, into your Everlasting Rest. Methinks I hear the Friends of the Bridegroom replying, Sweet Jesus, is this the End of Believing? Is this the Prize I have been running for? O Blessed Day when I knew thee! But Thrice Blessed Day when I came to be with thee! Blessed be the Instrument that converted me; but Thrice Blessed be the God that made Use of that Instrument. Methinks I see them sit down on their Thrones with Crowns on their Heads, and hear them tuning their Harps, and most Melodiously beginning to sing that Song which they resolve never to end, *Rev. 5. 33. Blessing, and Honour, and Glory, and Power, be unto him that sitteth upon the Throne, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever. Amen.*

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*F I N I S.*

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

**T**HE same Author hath some time since put forth a Book, proving some Infants to have Faith, and a Right to Baptism; and also shewing what State the Soul is in, in the very Act of coming to Christ. To be Sold by the aforesaid Mr. Hillier and Mr. Pasham.

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### ERRATA.

**P**Ag. 45. lin. 13. for *their*, read *your*. p. 49. l. 6. for *Men*, r. *Man*. l. 11. for *bad*, r. *hath*. p. 50. l. 8. add 6. p. 56. l. 32. for *doth* r. *both*. p. 57. l. 7. for *profess*, r. *possess*. p. 61. l. 19. for *you*, r. *you'll*. p. 71. l. 7. for *that*, r. *that's*. p. 101. l. 30. for *grieve*, r. *grinde*. l. 31. blot out *not*. p. 102. l. 12. for *grieve*, r. *grinde*. l. 21. for *Pillows*, r. *Pillars*. p. 107. l. 6. for *tell*, r. *call*. p. 121. l. 10. for *now*, r. *never*. p. 127. l. 1. for *no*, r. *us*. p. 138. l. 3. after *hast*, r. *not*. p. 156. l. 36. after *Race*, add *of Man*. p. 157. l. 17. for *Objects*, r. *Abjects*. p. 159. l. 8. for *to*, r. *a*. p. 170. l. 3. for *now*, r. *unto*. p. 174. l. 26. for *Stars*, r. *Scars*. p. 182. l. 15. blot out *not*. l. 34. for *one*, r. *axe*. p. 200. l. 14. for *hang*, r. *hangs*.

Some few lesser Mistakes in Letters and Mispointings the Reader is desired to rectifie with his Pen.









